# THE SACRAMENTAL VISION OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS AND DAVID JONES

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents,
to Anthony, and to Diane Duffield, who
first introduced me to the poetry of Hopkins.

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the nature of what I have termed "the sacramental vision" of Gerard Manley Hopkins and David Jones: it is an exploration of the mutually sustaining relationship between poetry and religion; or, as Jones puts it, between art and sacrament. The key to the relationship is to be found in language: the inherited language of theologian and poet is saturated with metaphor, sign and symbol, linguistic forms of a particularly resistant and irreducible kind. In literature, as in religion, such forms represent ultimate points of vision, to which in trust we assent, and from which we infer belief, that is, we are required to convert what begins as "an impression upon the Imagination" into a belief which may be tested by reason. The poet's renewal of such sacramental signs is a necessary exercise of the religious imagination if each generation is to remake the beliefs it has inherited. The opening chapter is an examination of the origins of Hopkins's and Jones's use of the sacramental sign and the subsequent chapters scrutinise the value of sign-making to the development of the poetic method of both poets. I suggest that this method is best elucidated through three controlling principles: the Coleridgean view of the sacramental potential of language helps to define the verbal content of the poem; the Thomist sacramental schema instresses the form of the poem; and the Newmanesque process of notional and real assent determines the grammar or inscape of the

total oeuvre as a chronicle of the development of the poet's spiritual growth. Hopkins and Jones deepen our understanding of a grammar common to faith and belief, shared by poet and theologian, by claiming that poetry should be the tranforming crucible of the encounter between the experience of the poet, the reader and the divine.

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## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN FOOTNOTES

(for full details, please see Bibliography)

| | |
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| ANA | David Jones, The Anathemata, Faber, 1952 |
| BL | S.T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, unless stated, references are to the Everyman edition, 1952 |
| CN | S.T. Coleridge, The Notebooks, 3 vols., ed. Kathleen Coburn |
| DG | David Jones, The Dying Gaul, Faber, 1978 |
| DH | G.M. Hopkins, The Correspondence with R.W. Dixon, ed. C.C. Abbott |
| DJL | Dai Great-Coat: a self portrait of David Jones in his letters, ed. R. Hague, London, 1980 |
| EA | David Jones, Epoch and Artist, Faber, 1959 |
| FLH | G.M. Hopkins, Further Letters, ed. C.C. Abbott |
| IP | David Jones, In Parenthesis, Faber, 1937 |
| JPH | G.M. Hopkins, The Journals and Papers, eds. H. House and G. Storey |
| LB | G.M. Hopkins, The Letters to Robert Bridges, ed. C.C. Abbott |
| PH | G.M. Hopkins, Poems, ed. Gardner and MacKenzie, Fourth Edition, 1970 |
| SH | G.M. Hopkins, The Sermons and Devotional Writings, ed. C. Devlin |

## Chapter One: Sacrament and Symbol: the Priority of Imagination

"... sign and sacrament are to be predicated not of some men and their practices, but of all men and their practices..... ."

"... there adheres to man's making a 'religious something' which is in the nature of a sign and which partakes of that juxtaposing by which was inanis et vacua became radiant with form and abhorrent of vacua by the action of the Artifex, the Logos."

David Jones,
"Art and Sacrament"

David Jones's essay "Art and Sacrament", first published in 1955, and later collected with other writings in Epoch and Artist, is the starting point of this thesis. The sub-title of the essay rather lengthily claims that it is "An Enquiry Concerning the Arts of Man and the Christian Commitment to Sacrament in Relation to Contemporary Technocracy". This "enquiry" of Jones reaches several conclusions, but the most significant is his open identification of art with sacrament: he argues that there adheres to man's making a mysterious and sacred significance so that the work of art is a visible sign of a spiritual reality, in the same way that man-made bread and wine symbolically bespeak an inward, hidden grace in the eucharistic rite. Jones's analogy discloses a habit of thinking - and indeed, seeing - in which imaginative creativity is wedded to religious inspiration. It is the product of a complex cultural history and it places Jones amongst an "invisible stream" of writers who have tried to reclaim Eliot's "associated sensibility" for a fallen, post-Enlightenment age. In particular, Jones's observation links him with Gerard Manley Hopkins, whose own fascination with the sacramental significance of language derives, like Jones's, from ideas explicit or implicit in Catholic dogma, especially from the doctrinal definition of the substantial presence in the eucharistic host. As Jones writes, " I learnt by an analogy that could not in any way be pressed, that a tree in a painting ... must not be a re-presenting only of a tree, of sap and thrusting wood; it must really be

a 'tree' under the species of paint."[1]

If, as Jones claims, art and sacrament are analogous, then the implications of the claim are far-reaching: the work of art will contain two realities, or two "truths", to extend Jones's reference to the tree. The artist may re-present the literal truth of the tree as "sap and thrusting wood", tree as botanical fact; but always the literal is subsumed by the figurative: the artist is caught between the temporal and the timeless in his representation of reality. That representation of reality can be divided into two contrasted relationships according to Jones: in the first, art imitates what is there in reality; in the second, it imitates what is not there. The critic Thomas McFarland in his book Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin identifies the former relationship in which art holds a mirror up to nature as mimetic, and the latter tradition of artistic activity, in which art is imitative of what is not there, as meontic. The opposition of these two approaches, the mimetic and the meontic, can be illustrated in basic terms by Keats's comparison of himself to Byron: "You speak of Lord Byron and me - there is this great difference between us. He describes what he sees - I describe what I imagine."[2] The two modes, though contrasted, can intermingle in the work of a single practitioner, for as methods of artisitic activity they form a continuum rather than an absolute opposition, but Jones appears to be claiming that the artist's ascertaining of social, topographical

or botanical fact, the job of mimetic documentation, is to be relegated to an inferior role. The literal truth is important only in so far as the work of art, to be aesthetically worthy, must transcend its temporal origins. Is Jones claiming, then, that the purposes of art must be made to accord with those of a proselytising Christianity? I think not, for Jones strives to capture the Scotistic "haecceitas" or "thisness" of an object - "it must really be a tree under the species of paint" - before metamorphosing object into metaphor; as he declares, "without body, without sacrament".[3] To employ one of Jones's favourite words, the "creatureliness" of the physical world must be substantially realised in the artist's work. But we must be alert to the dangers inherent in Jones's premise, because it is precisely when the poet's metaphors are obviously subjugated to a hectoring creed that the endeavour as art fails. We have only to look at Jones's In Parenthesis or Hopkins's "The Wreck of the Deutschland" to see this, for as I shall show later, there is in both works an unresolved antagonism between mimetic adequacy and religious faith, which makes out both as "apprentice" pieces.

What then distinguishes sacramental significance from mere allegorical representation is the belief of the artist in the substantive, yet simultaneously inter-related, nature of the mimetic and meontic modes. In the sacramental relationship of sign to thing signified, both terms have an existential independence: as Jones would have it, "both are real and both good".

The sign witnesses to another reality and is a focus of that reality, but is not subsumed by it. Sign and signified enjoy a relationship, not of inference, but of consubstantiality, whereas a symbol in its weakest sense seeks a binary or allegorical relationship in which word and idea are clearly circumscribed. The independence of the symbol is easily exhausted as meaning assumes a greater importance than word.

Sign lies at the heart of Jones's equation of art with sacrament, his central thesis being that the poem or painting becomes art by sacramentalising the world; by transforming object to subject, a thing into a metaphor for some divine intent. It has already been stated that a complex cultural history lies behind the formation of such a view, and in Jones's case we have his numerous essays and letters which attest to the profound influences of neo-Thomist philosophy and Coleridgean poetry on his art. But where is Hopkins's place in this "invisible stream" of writers who have returned constantly to the nexus between imagination and spirituality? I would argue that Hopkins, like Jones, sought in theological enquiry a philosophic basis for the reconciliation of religion and art speculatively and his own poetry and vocation personally. The means of that reconciliation, as I shall demonstrate, is the sacramental sign. Consequently, to justify the readings of the poetry of Hopkins and Jones which are presented in the subsequent chapters of this thesis, it is important first to spend some time dealing with the

concepts and influences, some explicit, others more circumstantial and less conscious, which went into the creation of the poetic method of these writers.

Again, Jones provides the starting point of our enquiry: he clearly acknowledges his debt to Aquinas in the consolidation of his personal philosophy of art. Aquinas posits the fusion of forms which in art is termed the "symbol", in religious ritual the "sign" or sacrament, and this provides an intellectual sanction for the analogy which Jones had been trying to draw between versions of Post-Impressionism on the one hand and his untutored understanding of Catholic eucharistic theology on the other, on the basis that both depend upon an incarnational theory of knowledge. "The artist is, at bottom and always, an inveterate believer in 'transubstantiation' of some sort. The sign must be the thing signified under forms of his particular art."[4]

The philosophical training Hopkins received in his Jesuit seminar days was at least a nominal Thomism, albeit "a debased, derivative, uncritical Thomism" as F. Shea puts it in his essay "Another Look at 'The Windhover'",[5] and the lack of intellectual vigour in the Manuals from which Hopkins was taught, goes far to explain Hopkins's attraction to Scotus, rather than Aquinas. We can accept that the Scotistic 'haecceitas" is the feature which drew Hopkins's allegiance, understandably in a poet so passionately interested in particularity as Hopkins showed himself to be. I do not

believe, however, that sufficient attention has been paid to those Thomist influences, more affecting Hopkins's sensibility than his conscious reason, which contribute to the creation of his poetic method.

Hopkins declares in "The Wreck of the Deutschland" that "with a fling of the heart" he fled "to the heart of the Host" and this instinctive attraction to the eucharistic signs is also reflected in his translation of Aquinas's Corpus Christi hymn, "Adoro te supplex, latens deitas". If indeed, as Jones declares, "the Mass makes sense of everything", then it is instructive to consider what Aquinas has to say on the sacraments, since the Catholic doctrine of the sacraments is, in effect, a rationalisation of Aquinas's "theologically based worldliness ... and theology open to the world".[6] The Mass does make sense of Hopkins's and Jones's poetry for at the centre of the eucharistic rite and the observances of the poet is the mutually informing relationship of poetic word and the Incarnate Word. The significant locus for us is the Third Part of the Summa Theologiae, the Treatise on the Sacraments, the first article under the sixtieth question, "What is a Sacrament?"

At the heart of Aquinas's exploration of the sacraments in the Summa is his preoccupation with sign. Here we find an explicit yoking together of metaphysical and physical reality as he strives to express what he sees as a fundamental need of mankind:

> **"... so long as we know through a glass in a dark manner, we need sensible signs in order to reach spiritual things: and this is the province of the sacraments."**
>
> (Qs.61, Art.4, Reply Obj.1)

Aquinas's identification of sacraments as both containers and causes of grace means that these "sensible signs" are much more than mere symbols, performing an allegorical function. The sign, on the contrary, has a substantive and performative character for Aquinas. Its performative nature is intimately bound up with what Aquinas terms "determinate words":

> **"... in the sacraments determinate sensible things are required, which are as the sacramental matter, much more is there need in them of a determinate form of words."**
>
> (Qs.60, Art.7, Obj.3)

Aquinas makes clear that words must be conjoined to the sensible signs, in exactly that same way that in the mystery of the Incarnation, the Word of God is united to sensible flesh. In the sacrament, the signification of things is completed by means of words, so that word and thing continue "in the formation of one thing, like form and matter".

If, as Aquinas claims, signs are given to men as a

means of discovering the unknown through the known, then only by an act of faith can that discovery be made. We must take on trust what the sign signifies; indeed, initially, we must trust <u>that</u> the sign is capable of signification. This, I believe, is crucial to Aquinas's argument and exemplifies the process of translating faith into belief, both in a literary and a theological sense: the poet's success is dependent upon image and that which is imagined being made credible to our imagination and subsequently our reason, in precisely the same way as the theologian seeks understanding through faith in the correct ordering of such significant words as "This is My Body". The Catholic grants to "word" the power to make - in the Divine fiat, the priest's Hoc est - so he is disposed to grant to all words, not creative power, but power to express truly, to place outside his own experience the reality which cannot be limited to his own experience. This, it seems to me, is what Aquinas means when he writes,

> **"As Augustine says the Word operates in the sacraments not because it is spoken, that is, not by the outward sound of the voice, but because it is believed in accordance with the sense of the words which is held by faith."**
>
> (Qs.60, Art.7, Reply Obj.1)

But a poet, concerned to express the interrelatedness of things, their substantial realities, must want to have his words mean, intensely and variously.

Hopkins and Jones were artists with abiding interests in the value and possibility of words in the making of poetry; above all they were concerned with literary modes which exploited a variety of reference to effect a unity of meaning: irony, the pun, metaphor and symbol. Aquinas was not. In the tenth article under the first question in the First Part of the Summa, St. Thomas enquires whether the words of the Bible are capable of signifying a multiplicity of meanings. He answers in the affirmative, but he emphasises the point that multiple meaning is restricted exclusively to Scripture. God alone can achieve it. Words in man's hands are capable of bearing only one meaning, because words alone are within his province; but "God, when, as in Scripture, He acts as author, is capable of calling on his powers of creation and providence to order the very things which His words mean", so that one word is then able to mean several things. The context is of course specialised: these are particular Biblical problems relating to the typological relationship between the Old and New Testaments. But in attributing everything existential to the creating God, Aquinas restricts the possibility of multiple verbal meaning to Scripture alone; this may seem a strange limitation in our terms, particularly in the light of Aquinas's own metaphysical system of the analogy of being. In any case, it is a limitation overcome by Hopkins and Jones, whose preoccupation with "All things counter, original, spare, strange" required both philosophical justification and a critical vocabulary of complementary variety and

association. This they found in nineteenth century England, more precisely in another philosopher-poet's evaluation of Scriptural truth: Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Although Coleridge's influence on David Jones is to be seen in Jones's many references to, and borrowings from, the earlier poet in his essays, poetry and art, Coleridge's influence on Hopkins is less easily quantifiable: Hopkins's written works contain few direct references to Coleridge at all. This seems strange in a poet who had read widely in the works of Coleridge's contemporaries, and who was quick to appreciate the very significant role of the Romantic poets in the formation of Victorian poetics. However, in a letter to Alexander Baillie in September 1863, Hopkins does indicate his reading and appreciation of Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism when he writes:

> **"... it appears to me that among Shakespeare's critics have been seen instances of genius, of deep insight, of great delicacy, of power, of poetry, of ingenuity, of everything a critic should have. I will instance Schlegel, Coleridge, Charles Lamb..."** [7]

What Hopkins found in Coleridge's criticism was the view that the imagination is the presiding faculty or "soul" of literature and as such defines its function. According to Coleridge, the work of art was not to be thought of as an object consciously contrived, like a

mechanical device, but as an autonomous and living entity, coming into being and growing and developing as a tree does, by the laws of its own nature. This conception of the process of literary creation as being "organic" rather than "mechanical" was pre-eminently exemplified for Coleridge by Shakespeare, whose images "become proofs of original genius only as far as they are modified by a predominant passion; or by associated thoughts or images awakened by that passion; or when they have the effect of reducing multitude to unity, or succession to an instant; or lastly, when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit, 'which shoots its being through earth, sea and air'." [8]

What Coleridge finds in Shakespeare is a "continuous undercurrent of feeling" that is "everywhere present", in short, a oneness, which is to be found in the unity of the poet and the object he experiences. That oneness is expressed in the symbols of the poet in which matter and spirit share consubstantiality, since a symbol "always partakes of the Reality which it renders intelligible" as Coleridge remarks in The Statesman's Manual. But the deepest meaning of Coleridge's idea of symbol is not to be found in his appreciation of Shakespeare; it is precisely outside the context of poetry that we must look and in particular to Coleridge's discussion of Scripture and the nature of scriptural truth which is found in The Statesman's Manual. It is an interesting, and significant,

departure from Aquinas's conclusions in the Summa:

> **"It is among the miseries of the present age that it recognises no medium between literal and metaphorical. Faith is either to be buried in the dead letter, or its name and honours usurped by a counterfeit product of the mechanical understanding, which in the blindness of self-complacency confounds symbol with allegories. Now an allegory is but a translation of abstract notions into a picture landscape ... on the other hand, a symbol ... always partakes of the Reality it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that Unity, of which it is the representative."** [9]

The key statement has been discussed frequently: Coleridge's definition of symbol, if not directly influenced by Aquinas's exposition of sacrament, is closely affined through the dependence of both upon the connotative power of sign. Coleridge goes on to assert in the language of the theologian that a given reality, whether material or spiritual, is conjoined to all other reality through the principle of the "consubstantiality" of all being, the "one life within us and abroad" of "The Eolian Harp". The term is used by Coleridge when speaking of the faculty of the imagination as,

> **"...that reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the Reason in Images of the Sense,**

> and organizing (as it were) the flux of the Senses by the permanence and self-circling energies of the Reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths, of which they are the conductors."[10]

Not only are the products of the human imagination, in this case, the poetry of the Scriptures, to be read as symbolic, the same is true of "another book, likewise a revelation of God - the great book of his servant Nature". For "it is the poetry of all human nature, to read it likewise in a figurative sense, and to find therein correspondencies (sic) and symbols of the spiritual world."[11] The literal-mindedness of the author of the Summa is exchanged for the vision and intuition of the Romantic poet, but the critical vocabulary is remarkably similar. If Aquinas is concerned to define the sign of the Mass, then Coleridge is using the language of the eucharist to explain the nature of sign. Ideas, which in theology had become by Coleridge's day, matter of course and inert, became alive and drastically innovative when transferred into the alien soil of Romantic aesthetics. Thus in Keble's reference to "symbols" in his Lectures on Poetry, the verbal echoes of The Statesman's Manual are quite unmistakable:

> "In short, Poetry lends Religion her wealth of symbols and similies: (sic) Religion restores these again to Poetry, clothed with so splendid

> a radiance that they appear to be no longer merely symbols,but to partake of the nature of sacraments".
>
> (Vol.II,480)

The imagination, which is for Coleridge the sign-making faculty, is the unifying faculty, bringing together the particular and the universal, subjective and objective, that is, all reality. The working of this faculty is described by Coleridge thus,

> "The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power ... reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities; of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image..." [12]

Coleridge's unifying, detail-fusing imagination, which he contrasts with mere fancy, anticipates Hopkins's "instress", and in so doing, shows that Hopkins's "discoveries" of such terms as "instress" and "inscape"

have a pre-Victorian history and are by no means so unprecedented in Hopkins's milieu as they have often been made out to be. As Coleridge does, Hopkins attends not only to such energy in the human interior but also to the energy concentrated in a being or beings in the external world as well, that is, to the "inscape" within the object that captures the poet's attention.

All reality, then, for Coleridge is consubstantial and as such is capable of significant representation; but representation is dependent upon our perception of consubstantiality and Coleridge goes on to define such symbol-perceiving as an act of faith. Indeed, both symbol perceiving and making are understood by Coleridge as religious acts. Our understanding of the religious context of sign in Hopkins and Jones is deepened by Coleridge's definition of the action of the primary and secondary imagination:

> "The Primary Imagination I hold to be the living Power and Prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The Secondary Imagination I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation."[13]

The act of perceiving symbols (the Primary Imagination)

or of making symbols (the Secondary Imagination) is an exercise of the generative mind, the mind of man echoing the creative fiat of God. The imaginative act is also a religious act: a finite participation in the infinitely creative act of God demands of the perceiver a commitment of self involving trust and knowledge. We take on trust the imaginative adequacy of the symbol, whilst perceiving the unity of being within the difference; the perception of unity, indeed, is a natural concomitant of that faith and love. Coleridge's theory is best elucidated through the poetic practice of Hopkins in his poem, "The Windhover": the processes of poetic creation and religious experience are not merely analogous, but actually <u>significant</u> of one another.

The Coleridgean symbol can be said to be "sacramental" in the sense we have been discussing, as it recovers the theologically-moribund efficacious sign for the aesthetic purposes of a post-Enlightenment age. The Coleridgean symbol, like the Thomist sacrament, is a sensible sign, a material object or ritual gesture, which points to something beyond itself. Symbol and sacrament actually make present what they represent, involving a union of recipient and object. The Thomist sacrament, like the Coleridgean symbol, is a finite participation in the infinite creative act of God, the Coleridgean, and scriptural, I AM. Lastly both Thomist sacrament and Coleridgean symbol are encounters with the divine and in the works of Hopkins and Jones, there is a marked tendency towards a more personal, and thus less

codified and prescriptive, sacramentalism: sacramental sign is the means whereby the spiritual claims us, and we, it.

We are brought back to the idea expressed earlier that the making or perceiving of a symbol is for Coleridge a kind of act of faith. It is a commitment of the whole self to another. I would suggest that this commitment is much like the commitment involved in the reception of a sacrament as Aquinas conceives it: an encounter, through sensible reality, with God. Aquinas makes clear that the locus of encounter with Christ, the sacrament, opens up levels of reality and time unknown to the recipient:

> **"... a sacrament is a commemorative sign of what has gone before, I mean the passion of Christ; and a demonstrative sign of what is being brought about in us through the passion of Christ, that is, grace; and a prognostic, that is, a prophetic sign of the future glory."** [14]

The idea is echoed by Paul Tillich in his Dynamics of Faith, who remarks that the symbol,

> **"not only opens up dimensions and elements of reality which otherwise would remain unapproachable but also unlocks dimensions and elements of our soul which correspond to the dimensions and elements of reality. There are**

> within us dimensions of which we cannot become aware except through symbols, as melodies and rhythms in music."[15]

What the sacramental symbol does for Aquinas, Coleridge and Tillich is to mediate between a subject and a reality other than the self. It "reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities" according to Coleridge, which are different and yet the same. Growth takes place in the subject, the perceiver or creator of the symbol, through the mediation of the symbol. Thus enriched, we are able to commit ourselves more fully to the symbolic reality and are able to perceive it more completely.

Coleridge believed that it was possible to find in the sacramental symbol new and progressively greater richness of meaning since poetic or religious symbols cannot be paraphrased or adequately expressed in philosophical or abstract language. The human mind works primarily not in terms of rational argument, but in terms of symbol and myth: the critic John Coulson in Religion and Imagination argues that Coleridge's poetry shows how we may hold imaginative assents which we can neither adequately explain nor demonstratively verify. Coleridge's successor, the philosopher and theologian, John Henry Newman, however, goes further: he questions the Coleridgean position in his theological consideration of the objective verification for the perceptions of mystery expressed in the symbol. Newman

seeks imaginative assents which <u>are</u> convertible into certitudes, so that belief is authenticated; Newman argues that the theologian must use his imagination, like the literary critic, to struggle with meaning since it is the achievement of linguistic sufficiency which seems to guarantee the fulfiment of poetic and religious experience. I wish to show that the poetic method of Hopkins and Jones is most fully expressed by Newman in his <u>Grammar of Assent</u> as supplemented by the Notebooks and other writings: in short, their poetry exemplifies what Newman's theology explains. As specifically Catholic poets, they attempt to effect a resolution between an inchoate "impression upon the Imagination" and its ultimate issue in "a system or creed in the reason". In other words, they attempt to discover the compatability of faith and belief: what poet and theologian seek, as Newman makes clear, lies "hid in language" and is expressed in the sacramental sign.

Newman unequivocally addresses himself to the relationship proposed by Coleridge, and refracted through Keble, between poetic language and experience, and in so doing, returns theological reflection from the realm of abstract speculation to the world of human experience. Newman quickly realised that the univocal language of philosophy had to be superseded by the symbolic, since only then could the individual find the means to express what is immaterial and yet part of the wholeness of human existence: Hopkins's "incomprehensible certainty" which leaves "minds

swinging, poised but on the quiver ... the ecstasy of interest."[16] The act of trust in that wholeness requires symbol, which can express not only what is objectively verifiable, but also what finds its only verification in man's willing and feeling encounter with it, the ideal and the sacred. Coulson, in Religion and Imagination, has a pertinent observation to make here: "because faith, however conceived, is a spontaneous act, and because spontaneity - the very power of imagination - presupposes trust, without trust there can be no faith".[17] It is precisely here that we see Hopkins's and Jones's advance upon Coleridgean practice, but the achievement is evident only in the later works. In these works we trust that the experience of imaginative dissipation and disconfirmation advocated by Coleridge is underwritten by the real vision of Christ which makes sense of the fragmented strivings of the artist. What is essentially a mode of religious experience becomes, in the work of Hopkins and Jones, "simultaneously a mode of aesthetic climax in which the whole meaning and structure of the work of art is changed and transformed."[18] It is also a means, and a record, of individual spiritual growth. Without that trust, the artist's work risks inevitable disintegration and dissociation: this is evident in "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and in In Parenthesis, in which works the act of religious and aesthetic transformation remains, as I shall show, incomplete; the Newmanesque probabilities have failed to converge into certitude; the leap of faith has fallen short. When the poet

exploits in the sacramental symbol a variety of reference to effect a unity of meaning, then we are forced to respond imaginatively by seeing anew what is "hid in language". As Newman makes clear, it is the image of Christ which can bring together truths which "appear to diverge from each other".

We can see Newman's ideas in the process of formulation in his notes on translating Athanasius in 1842. They bear a striking resemblance to the Notes of Hopkins written in 1868, the year he became a Jesuit. Newman writes:

> "It is sometimes erroneously supposed that such illustrations as this (Word, Son, Image, Wisdom) are intended to explain how the Sacred Mystery in question is possible, whereas they are merely intended to show that the words we use concerning it are not self-contradictory, which is the objection most commonly brought against them. To say that the doctrine of the Son's generation does not intrench upon the Father's perfection and immutability, or negative the Son's eternity, seems at first inconsistent with what the words Father and Son mean, till another image is adduced, such as the sun and radiance, in which that alleged inconsistency is seen to exist in fact. Here one image corrects another; and the accumulation of images is not, as is often thought, the restless and fruitless effect of the mind to enter into the

> **Mystery, but is a safeguard against any one image, nay any collection of images, being supposed sufficient."** [19]

The method by which religious conceptions are formed by "opposite strokes" is at the heart of how theological doctrines are formed, according to Newman; it is also the method of poetic utterance, particularly when the poet wishes to convey religious insights authentically. Hopkins's Notes represent a critical point in his thinking about poetry and echo Newman on several accounts, but principally in their rejection of idealism and philosophical abstraction, and the art which is created out of successive experience. They assert that a poem "explodes" into meaning because language must and can express experience as simultaneity, defeating the bifurcation of meaning from experience by refusing to generalise. By fusing sign with signified, language can become sacramentally Coleridge's "living power". Both Jones and Hopkins have an aesthetic and linguistic interest in rendering the very being or inscape of an object: the efficacious sign which the artist is always seeking, according to Jones, is seen most completely in the eucharistic doctrine and in the accretion of significance in the traditional symbols of Christianity. Here the imagination is forced to compare like with unlike and by the process which Newman identifies as "saying and unsaying" we come to a "positive result". This "method of antagonism" causes us to confront the complex and often discordant

particularities of what Hopkins termed in the 1868 Notes, the "prepossession" of a work or image, for "the deeper the form penetrates, the prepossession flushes the matter." It is from this activity that the mind recovers the sense of the whole and with it a new prepossession belonging to the whole. We cease, therefore, to experience simple chronology, and to see sequentially: we respond to what Newman termed a "contuition", that is, "a sight of the thing through and by means of the things which lie about it".[20] Hopkins described the distinction between sequential and simultaneous apprehension as akin to that between chromatic and diatonic art, and in so doing, echoes Coleridge's critical observation of the Shakespearean image which "has the effect of reducing multitude to unity, or succession to an instant". Hopkins distinguishes between art which is formed on the principle of gradation or succession, and art which juxtaposes a series of fixities and asks the observer to make an immediate reference between them. The preference, therefore, in Hopkins's and Jones's art, is for the sign which releases, in Pound's words, a multiple meaning "in an instant of time". The poem or work of art must fuse thinking and feeling in an irreducible configuration of particulars seized as epiphany and oneness: the sacramental associations are obvious. As Newman makes clear, when we speak of "the Word made flesh", the metaphor does not heal separation by making correspondences which obliterate distinctions, rather it maintains difference in the process of making

relationships and so enables us to ask questions about the very act of making symbols: this is precisely the concern of The Anathemata, and such poems of Hopkins as "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire", in which both artists bring about a radical shift in the prevailing religious metaphors by which their age thought and felt.

Newman's significance for Hopkins and Jones is two-fold: the chief contention in his Grammar of Assent is that religious belief originates in that activity we call imagination, and that its verification depends upon its first being made credible to imagination. Newman's argument is founded upon the association between imagination and belief and his certainty that we are moved to act by what grips our imagination. He does not beg the question how what begins as "an impression upon the imagination" becomes "a system or creed in the reason", but what is significant for the purposes of this thesis is that he assumes faith and belief are to each other as implicit to explicit, inarticulate to articulate or pre-conceptual to conceptual. They share a common grammar or structure. His claim that the cognitive range is extended into the intuitive vision is of great importance to Hopkins and Jones: this permits an intellective role for the imagination and offers a philosophical basis for the integration of faith and reason. Moreover, the overall form that the poet's work adopts is Newman's "grammar of assent": the whole oeuvre can be interpreted as a structured convergence of the

probabilities necessary for real assent:

> **"I did say yes ...**
> **For so conceived, so to conceive thee is done."**

If Newman's argument dictates the shape of the progression of the artist's work considered as a whole, then that progression from notional to real assent is seen locally in the individual poem and metaphor. Newman's differentiation between notional and real assent is best understood through the poet's response to language: Newman distinguishes between a use of language which is generalised and unspecific, in which signs bear an arbitrary relation to concepts and experience, and on the other hand, the most intense and imaginatively coercive use of language, "apprehended as experiences and images". The poet's images, though inadequate in themselves, when appreciated cumulatively, begin to convey something of the nature of Christian Revelation which is, as Newman declared, "not a revealed system, but ... a number of detached and incomplete truths belonging to a vast system unrevealed, of doctrines and injunctions mysteriously connected together ...". It is "a mystery", "a doctrine lying hid in language",[21] which attracts the artist and theologian for as David Jones has written, "the parts that are united in one in an art-work may be, for some, the most convincing analogy which they can get in this world of the proportioned parts of the heavenly city ...".[22]

My purpose, then, in this thesis is to show the deep, mutually-sustaining relationship enjoyed by religion and literature in the construction of Hopkins's and Jones's poetic method. It is a relationship which, as Catholic poets, Hopkins and Jones are well-placed to explore: close scrutiny of their work reveals that the grammar upon which their poetry is structured is derived from a number of sources. As artists, both are aware of the paradoxical disjunction and co-existence of the secular "outer" world with the "inner" world of religious experience; the urgent need to seek a means of recording the ambiguity of that perception is met in a linguistic tradition which sees language as a significant expression of the human condition: language seen as metaphoric, symbolic, sacramental. It is the artist's job to conserve and develop these "signa" as Jones makes clear:

> **"the cult-man stands alone in Pellam's land: more precariously than he knows he guards the signa: the pontifex among his house treasures, (the twin urbes his house is) he can fetch things new and old."**[23]

The "signa" are the unparaphrasable elements of poem or liturgy, which give substance and authentication to the metaphors that direct us to ultimate points of vision, to experiences which are irreducible and uninvertible. The adequacy of the poet's "signa", the extent to which we can assent imaginatively to them, is dependent in works of literature which deal with religion, upon a

corresponding religious adequacy. As Coulson writes:

> **"As in literature, so in religion, if our response is not to be a bland rhetorical gesture, it must signalize that intolerable wrestle with meaning, that sense not so much of dialectical pressure, as more properly of 'crucifixion', which is at once a sign of literary and religious integrity."** [24]

As I shall show, the literary integrity of both Hopkins and Jones is intimately bound up with the spiritual: the development of their literary taste is the progression of their spiritual growth, in Newman's terms, from faith to belief. Each begins with signs and symbols which, subsequently, we may have to recognise as immature projections, and, as with the growth to religious certitude, so with the development of literary critical judgement, Hopkins and Jones face Newman's question: what authorises conviction? Are the signs authentic? The subsequent chapters of my thesis address these questions in corroboration of Jones's belief that the action of the poet is "at one with the profound intention of the art of the man at the Altar." [25]

## FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1 Quoted by H.S. Ede, "David Jones", Horizon, Vol.VIII, No.44, August 1943, p.128

2 Quoted by T.McFarland, Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin, Princeton, 1981, pp.383 ff.

3 "Art and Sacrament", EA, p.167

4 "Art in Relation to War", DG, p.136

5 F.X. Shea, S.J., "Another Look at "The Windhover"", Victorian Poetry, Vol.II, 1964, pp.219-239

6 Josef Pieper, Scholasticism: Personalities and Problems of Medieval Philosophy, London, 1961, p.119

7 FLH, CXXI, p.203

8 BL, ed. J. Shawcross, 2 vols.,Oxford, 1907, II, 16

9 The Statesman's Manual in Lay Sermons, ed. R.J. White, Vol.6 of The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. K. Coburn, Princeton, 1972, p.30

10 ibid., p.29

11 ibid., Appendix C, p.70

12 BL, op. cit., II, 12

13 ibid., I, 202

14 Summa Theologiae, III, Qs.60, Art.3, Burns, Oates and Washbourne, London, 1914

15 Dynamics of Faith, V.10, New York, 1956, p.42

16 LB, pp.187, 188. Hopkins first read Newman's Grammar of Assent in 1873 (see FLH, p.58) and in 1881 Hopkins had asked Newman if he might bring out a commentary on the Grammar, but Newman had refused on the grounds that it was superfluous. See also J. Coulson, Religion and Imagination - "in aid of a grammar of assent", Oxford, 1981, p.73

17 Coulson, ibid., p.76

18 S. Prickett, Romanticism and Religion, Cambridge, 1976, p.15

19 Select Treatises of St. Athanasius, 2 vols., Oxford, 1842-4, I, 43-4

20 Quoted by Coulson, op. cit., p.71

21 ibid, p.126

22 "Art in Relation to War", DG, p.135

23 ANA, p.50

24 Coulson, op. cit., p.158

25 "Notes on the 1930s", DG, p.47

# CHAPTER 2

## "Authentic Cadence"

## The Sacramental Method of

## Gerard Manley Hopkins

"The intelligible forms of ancient poets,
The fair humanities of old religion,
...
They live no longer in the faith of reason!
But still the heart doth need a language, still
Doth the old instinct bring back the old names."

S.T. Coleridge, The Piccolomini, II, 123-31

It is a difficult and often fruitless task to establish the influence of one poet, or group of poets, on another: there is, however, a need to understand what binds a poet such as Hopkins to his age and how his thought grows out of his time, if we are to understand the nature of his poetic innovation.

Coleridge showed the nineteenth century "that the deepest needs of church and society were primarily 'poetic'"[1] and above all he effected the possibility of a union between aesthetic and theological thought, which was to have important repercussions throughout the post-Romantic era and to find final development in T.S. Eliot's definition of what constitutes "tradition". "To conform merely", Eliot writes, "would be for the new work not really to conform at all; it would not be new, and would not therefore be a work of art."[2] As Prickett reminds us, great art, like genuine theology, changes our understanding of all that has preceded and led up to it. "Tradition" is not an exploration and development of one man's ideas, it is a series of great and original innovators building on each other, or on a common source; in the case of Coleridge, Newman, Hopkins and Eliot, the common source being two thousand years of Christian thought, itself the product of the Old Testament prophetic tradition. Coleridge, then, stands "in a long line of poets and theologians extending back over three thousand years of history who have enabled the people of God...to understand and re-formulate their position in times of change and crisis

by a radical shift in the prevailing religious metaphors by which they thought and felt."[3]

If Coleridge prepared the way for a reconciliation between Beauty and Truth, the Real and the Ideal, it was not until Hopkins that the resolution was to be realised in all its complexity. The Romantic movement arose, in part, from the desire to bring the ideology of revolutionary France into literature, an urgently felt need to recreate reality, to re-discover a cosmos out of the chaos reality had become. There was an equally urgent need for an understanding of the complex and eternal Truth, which was elusive and yet felt to be apprehended in the experiences of such poets as Wordsworth, Keats and Coleridge. The desire to be, in Wordsworth's phrase, "true to the kindred points of heaven and home", produced the century's consistent endeavour to reconcile the world's complexity with some ideal source of coherence above and behind the temporal world, yet intersecting with the temporal to give it meaning.

The Romantic quest rarely achieved its goal: the moment of the intersection of the real and complex with the ideal and singular, for example, in Wordsworth's skating episode, (The Prelude, Book One, ll. 425 ff.), is a fleeting vision of a world redeemed. Time is suspended, arrested and the vital intensity of the elusive "movement in and out of time" is seen as fugacious, nebulous, numinous. It teases the poet to attempt the concrete formulation of something

which is beyond the capability of words: Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale", Matthew Arnold's "The Scholar-Gipsy" are such examples. But as a critic has observed, the unattainability of the goal does not negate the validity or the persistence of the attempt to unite religious and literary faith: "Childe Roland (the symbol of the 19th and 20th Century poetic imagination) at least made the journey, and came again and again, to the dark tower".[4]

Few single works of literature depict either the actualities or the potentialities of life in full. Much of Hopkins's poetry certainly does not. But it is along these lines that one can most easily see its wide and real significance. Its import is by no means to be a mere re-statement of Catholic doctrine in poetry: it is to show, with compelling intensity, what men have made of life against what they might make of it. What Shelley claims in the "Preface" to "Prometheus Unbound" as his guiding principle is taken up later by Hopkins:

**"My purpose has hitherto been simply to familiarize...the more select classes of poetical readers with beautiful idealisms of moral excellence...".**

The word "idealism" means here something supra-realistic, because it is something which excels reality; the same idea is centrally expressed in Shelley's Defence of Poetry and in Hopkins's view of the mutually sustaining

relationship between literature and religion: Shelley's essential point is that literature is a great moral power not through straightforward instructing, nor through making moral discriminations and passing judgements favourable or unfavourable upon the ordinary actions of men, but through operating at an altogether profounder level, and enlarging the powers of mind by which these discriminations and judgements are to be made:

> "...poetry acts in another and diviner manner. It awakens and enlarges the mind itself... . Poetry lifts the veil from hidden beauty of the world... . A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively...the great instrument of moral good is the imagination... ."

This religious conception of the moral impact of poetry goes far beyond Arnold's assertion that poetry should be "fortifying": it leads to Hopkins's demonstration of how poetry should lead from one level of moral awareness to another always higher and more imaginative.

Hopkins, like his predecessors and contemporaries, was intent on penetrating and ordering reality in a new way, not on escaping it. The essential distinction between Hopkins and his fellow poets lies not in the goals he pursued or the questions he asked, but in the answers he accepted and the goals he reached. For him,

the "old instinct" brought back the oldest of names, in all its mystery and reality, to resolve the tensions of the quest. For Hopkins, the ideal, while transcendentally and massively mysterious, was nevertheless real, intensely present, identifiably "worded" by heaven and earth. The poem, "Let me be to thee as the circling bird" establishes Hopkins's "authentic cadence": God is love, a central, unifying source of meaning, at once splendidly mysterious; certain, yet unfathomable. This belief, however, is no comfortable certainty, but a certainty of paradox, for as Hopkins wrote in his definition of the meaning of a "mystery" to Catholics: "their knowledge leaves their minds swinging; poised, but on the quiver"; belief involves both certainty and tension. Hopkins's poetic method and content are permeated by this vision of life, whereby secular existence is transformed and redeemed from mere actuality by the mysterious presence of an ungraspable, but revealed God. The poet's method both clarifies and obfuscates its subject: the method is concrete and complex; distinct and diffuse; precise and yet obscure. The method, in short, is sacramental: it is a visible sign of an invisible God. It is a method in which the Real Presence, as in the Mass, is not merely symbolised, but is present in that which represents it, permeating its symbols, without ever being wholly contained or united by them. The poems, like the eucharistic elements, do not merely point beyond themselves to an unseen God, but are in their every aspect, so thoroughly informed by His presence that He is felt to be

both tangibly and immediately immanent, and obscurely, ungraspably transcendent. The realisation is always, according to Coleridge, that "the truth you are to rest in is the most pointed putting of the difficulty".

I have said that Coleridge at the beginning of the nineteenth century prepared the way for a full reconciliation between the aesthetic and theological spheres: it is Hopkins, however, who finally arrives at the sacramental vision of the world which makes variety coherent and beauty legitimate and thus effects a union between God, the self and the world. The access to that vision, which is completely comprehended in his poetry, is available to Hopkins only through his coalescence of a literary tradition which is in some way sacramental, with a theological tradition of Sacraments which is partially poetic. Christ the Word is seen to be the ultimate source of the integrity of Hopkins's poetry: eternal Truth is inaccessible, but through the form of myth, particularly the myth of the Incarnation, eternal Truth is expressed in sacramental form, using the elements of our sensible world. The poetic "word" is more than the echo of that initiating creative "fiat": rather the work of art partakes of the eternal creative act. "The mind, despite our defects, strives to engender in us...not only the inner Word, the idea remaining inside us, but a work at once material and spiritual, like ourselves, with something of our soul over and above."[5] As St. Augustine says, "The Word is in a way the art of Almighty God"; or as Newman concluded,

revelation is "a doctrine lying hid in language". The latter perfectly describes the poetic method of Hopkins, since it is through our struggle with words and meanings that we come into acquaintance with and recognise the fact of the Incarnation, as Professor Coulson points out. The poetic word and the Divine word have the capacity to bring many contradictory things into one: spiritual and physical, signifier and signified; the sacramentality of language is thus ineluctably bound up with the Sacrament of Incarnation. Christ reconciles divergent and conflicting descriptions (for example, sacrificial lamb and shepherd) by embodying them in one common representative - God - and thus, all words are reconciled in the Word, the perfect paradigm.

Newman argues in his An Essay in aid of a Grammar of Assent that what precipitates the certitude of religious assent are not single arguments of irresistible certainty, but a convergence of probabilities appealing to both the intellect and the imagination, and acting by "arguments too various for direct enumeration". Similarly, what constitutes an awareness of "tradition", sacramental or otherwise, in the work of a poet such as Hopkins, is not assent to a set of previously defined literary forms, but a consciousness that the poetic activity itself is, in Coleridge's words, "the very powers of growth and production". It is an activity which comprehends variety-in-unity (Coleridge notes that polarity is the constitutive

characteristic of the imagination) and is esentially complex and irreducible. The "convergence of probabilities" in Hopkins's case is the coming together of two worlds whose existence he acknowledged as paramount to his creative integrity: the literary and the religious. There is no room for critical dalliance with the idea of Hopkins as "priest or poet": he is essentially and necessarily priest and poet, for it is only by seeing religious integrity as somehow bound up with linguistic and creative integrity, that Hopkins could escape the enervating bewilderment of poets such as Arnold. Hopkins refuses to clarify or reduce to a single univocal meaning the nineteenth century paradox of stasis and development, since he realises that the believing world of past events and values and the sceptical world of everyday sense are not contradictory, but that they are mutually alive, neither dead nor unborn:

**"Between two worlds become much like each other**
**So I find words I never thought to speak".**[6]

This is not Arnold's two worlds, both being incompatible to him, but a way of fashioning a meaning by opposite strokes, a way of "saying and unsaying to a positive result".[7] The poet, like the theologian, faced by such polarities as that between the "dark descending" of God and His mercy, between God as "lightning and love", "winter and warm", as Coulson makes clear, must resist the temptation to surrender

his experience of the transcendent reality to forms which can only partially express it, or to give up the struggle altogether. Hopkins's approach to this mystery is Newman's: "we can only set right one error of expression by another. By this method of antagonism we steady our minds...by saying and unsaying to a positive result. We lay down that the Supreme Being is omnipresent or everywhere, and yet nowhere...He is ineffably one, yet He is exuberantly manifold."[8] Hopkins, then, finds himself "between two worlds", between the Coleridgean "desire and admiration of permanence" and the conviction of Newman that "here below to live is to change"; but between these two worlds, as T.S. Eliot remarks, "I find words I never thought to speak". Unlike Arnold's Scholar-Gipsy who wanders between two worlds, "pensive and tongue-tied, in hat of antique shape and cloak of grey", Hopkins realises that the pastoral sources of traditional religious imagery have neither been outmoded or invalidated, merely threatened. Once we deny the validity of the "polar form" of Coleridgean experience, once we seek for Blake's reductive "single vision", then the religious and poetic imagination stagnates. The polar form is crucial since it brings out the dialectical movement within tradition, which we experience as a suspension between permanence (continuity with the past) and revolutionary change (the anticipation of the future). Paradoxically, as Professor Coulson observes, it is Arnold who asserts that a religion which denies poetry and the imagination is under sentence of death, since it is peculiarly within the

experiences it shares with poetry and literature that religion is most vital. Hardy, many years later, was still writing within the Coleridgean tradition when he declared that poetry and religion still "touch each other, or rather modulate into each other."[9]

The words that Hopkins finds to speak are, therefore, the product of that tension - a "bi-focal existing" - which he observes to be at the core of our existence. Within Catholic tradition, belief in diversity has always presupposed a pre-existing unity: one reality must always be comprehended in another and by another: and that at "the heart of reality there exists a structure of things based upon reality in unity, agreement and completeness in difference."[10] That most significant word "Buckle!" in Hopkins's poem "The Windhover" is indicative of his sacramental method, where the physical and metaphysical realms meet with the violence of a flint being struck on a rock: "the fire that breaks from thee then" is the product of the transformation (or more precisely, transubstantiation) of the base metal of earthly existence into the "gold-vermilion" of divine splendour, which finds an echo in the holy fires of Yeats's Byzantium poems.

Hopkins's attempt to restore the "deus abscondus" of eighteenth century deism to the waste land of Victorian England involves the reconciliation of the secular with the religious, the intellectual with the emotive; the goal

of which is a unified Christian sensibility and indentification with Christ the Word, the ultimate unifier of conflicting spheres of existence. Hopkins draws upon the literary tradition of Coleridgean romanticism, with its emphasis upon the reconciling power of the imagination, to revitalise the Catholic sacramental tradition; and in so doing, bequeathes to his successor, David Jones, a re-invigorated set of metaphors by which faith is kept alive. The central image, for example, in "The Windhover" is not a mechanical "point of friction between two worlds conceived together" as Empson seems to think, but a synthesis of the physical and metaphysical in the metaphorical symbol of the bird. The windhover becomes for Hopkins the poetic testimony that sensuous beauty and Christian sacrifice are integrally and organically present in nature. Coleridge writes in "The Statesman's Manual: A Lay Sermon" that the senses are "indeed the appointed medium between heaven and earth", but "only, when, as a mere passive medium, they yield a free passage to its light". Wordsworth speaks of that same "recognition of glory", that unattended moment,

"...when the light of sense
Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed
The invisible world."[11]

The poet by hovering between images leaves "a middle state of mind more strictly appropriate to the imagination than any other".[12] What Coleridge makes available to Hopkins

is the means of articulating his emotions - the "affective will" - within the form of the Coleridgean symbol; for Coleridge, the rational, the conscious, the thought, is the form or the outline of the natural organic process. This presence of the natural within the conceptual synthesises the mechanical and the natural, for there must be in poetry, "not only a partnership, but a union; an interpenetration of passion and will, of spontaneous impulse and voluntary purpose".[13] Thus, just as the poet makes emotive use of the romantic symbol, the priest in Hopkins completes the imaginative synthesis by making the symbol the form in which the poet chooses to express intellectually held beliefs. So, if Coleridge the poet demonstrates to Hopkins the religious how to prevent his beliefs from becoming cliched, Hopkins the poet likewise gives back to theology a revitalised set of metaphors, since revelation is a "doctrine lying hid in language." Hopkins's meaning is only grasped in so far as we grasp the poem as a whole and the complete range of metaphor it convincingly realises.

Hopkins's faith saved him from some of the more specific and persistent perplexities which beset other nineteenth century writers: Ignatian thought clearly formulated for him the relationship amongst physical nature, man and God. In brief, nature is sacramental, a visible sign of its invisible creator: as Hopkins wrote, "This world then is word, expression, news of God". But creation is not

(pace Keble and others) to be identified with the Creator; it has no redemptive or moral powers: "The heavens declare the glory of God. They glorify God, but they do not know it." Windhovers, May blossom and aspens could not knowingly serve, prove or wholly embody God. Secondly, Hopkins's faith resolves for him the question of the mind's relation to the world, perhaps the central aspect of nineteenth century thought. The danger seen by many Romantics is that the imaginative mind, if wholly autonomous, might itself become like Blake's enemy of vision, Urizen, "unprolific,/ self enclos'd, all-repelling". As Coleridge wrote to Wordsworth, "the dread watch-tower of man's absolute self" could be a prison, as well as a splendid tower of vision. Wordsworth thus insists upon "a balance, an ennobling interchange/Of action from without and from within"[14], just as Coleridge envisages a joyous interaction between the world and the spiritual creative elements in man. Coleridge thus makes the imagination a dual power, a creative and visionary faculty, controlled by the will and the intellect, and in harmony with the phenomenal world. Hopkins's insight into the workings of the imagination may be gauged from a remark in his Journal: "What you look hard at seems to look hard at you"[15], an echo of Coleridge's Old Man gazing at and gazed on by the moon and also Keats's remark that "things semi-real such as Love, the Clouds etc (which) require a greeting of the spirit to make them wholly exist."[16] Hopkins is concerned with the imagination as a means of penetrating inmost reality, not as a fiction-making faculty.

It gives rise to reverence, a sense of the presence of God, and originates a sense of God's essence. The terms "inscape" and "instress" are coined by Hopkins to define the presence of God in things, the underlying pattern of divine meaning, and the act of spiritual interpretation needed to discern this pattern - "a greeting of the spirit". For Hopkins, however, the imagination could not be the source of divinity; Hopkins insists upon the objective reality of God and external nature. This view of the world's objective physical actuality, combined with a belief in its metaphysical eloquence as news of God, will be seen to have a crucial effect on the quality of Hopkins's metaphors and upon the stylistic method in general.

Hopkins's resolution of temporal and eternal, mind and world, subjective and objective, is made possible, is given a particular structure and justification, by his faith in God as the abiding centre, source and resolution of all dualities. As V.R. Ellis remarks:

"It is appropriate that when the Romantic movement had all but spent its force, when lack of faith in mind, art, divinity, the Christian God, Hopkins's belief in that oldest of the 'old names' gave Romanticism a new and vital form...and answered in a new- old way, the heart's old need for a language."[17]

## The Development of Hopkins's "Authentic Cadence"

It has been demonstrated that Hopkins's poetic method owes much to his views as philosopher and critic:[18] his struggle to come to terms with the metaphysical obscurity he felt to be inherent in the nature of God and His workings is inextricably bound up with the poet's view of language. Hopkins, following Coleridge, disliked the habit in English of reducing words to "specific marks" and thus postulated a theory of the "moments" of words which attempts to reconcile richness of suggestion with precision of meaning.[19] Hopkins viewed the "moments" of the word, and of the world, as rich, mysterious and yet precisely patterned. The poet in him could exploit to their fullest the complexities of the word and world, because there was underlying both the religious conviction of a metaphysical and metaphorical unity; as J. Hillis Miller puts it, " all things rhyme in Christ". What begins to emerge from the early diaries and journals is a dual vision: a reaching for that which is beyond mechanics and, simultaneously, a meticulous attention to a verbal formulation of the world's variety, its mechanical pattern. Hopkins's vision is dual, although not ambivalent; polar, although unified by the "mysterious certainty of God".

V.R. Ellis has remarked that Hopkins's religion affected his poems in ways deeper than that of supplying obvious Catholic content. This is self-evidently true, but her

comment causes her to overlook the centrally important fact that Hopkins's poetic method grew not only out of his philosophical and linguistic struggles, but also out of that "obvious Catholic content" which she dismisses. Hopkins's early involvement with Tractarianism (and thus indirectly, Coleridge) and his commitment to the centrally important rite of the Eucharist are vital factors in the process of assimilation and rejection which characterises the establishment of Hopkins's "authentic cadence". In order, therefore, to discern the development of Hopkins's poetics, it will be necessary to consider the evidence of the poetry.

## 20
## 'Too Much Fragrance Everywhere...': the poems before 1875

Scant critical attention has been given to the poems of Hopkins written during his formative late adolescent years from 1860 to 1866. No-one would claim for this early poetry an equal place with the post 1875 poems, but contained within these occasionally mawkish and sometimes sensitive verses are the roots of Hopkins's poetic method, his "authentic cadence". The very early poetry, that written between 1860 and 1863 and including such works as "A Vision of the Mermaids" and "Winter with the Gulf Stream", has a limited superficial vision of nature. As Jerome Bump has observed, borrowing Matthew Arnold's criticism of Tennyson, Hopkins here seems to be "dawdling with the painted shell"

of the universe.[21] The influence of Gerard's father, Manley Hopkins, is noticeable in the son's poems "Spring and Death" and also in "Easter". The moral response to nature as a revelatory book which prompted Manley Hopkins to write in Pietas Metrica:

"Earth, sea, and sky proclaim the holy truth,
The universe, a temple open wide,
Where nature, priestess sacred, from her youth
For ever sings the song beatified"[22]

can be distinguished in Gerard's early work also:

"Gather gladness from the skies,
Take a lesson from the ground,
Flowers to ope their heavenward eyes
And a Spring-time joy have found,
Earth throws Winter's robes away,
Decks herself for Easter Day".[23]

This use of the hymn of creation to teach a moral lesson is one of the traditional sources of that didacticism which pervades Hopkins's later nature poetry, and which is a characteristic of so much of Keble's poetry in The Christian Year. Indeed, the aims of the authors of Pietas Metrica, Gerard's father and uncle, have a distinctly Kebelian ring: "It was the design of the

writers of this volume to blend together two of man's best things, Religion and Poetry. They aimed at binding with another tie the feeling of piety with external nature and our daily thoughts. The books of Nature and Revelation have been laid side by side and read together".[24] Thus it is that Gerard's early inculcated response to nature is "sacramental" but only in the weak Tractarian sense of nature being a veiled means of access to a higher reality. The impression given is that the young poet merely sees, but neither feels, nor is able to intellectualise sufficiently, his response to the real.

The Keatsian aestheticism of this formative period is a further contributor to Hopkins's limited vision of nature: the excessive sensation seeking, the dreamy otherworldliness of "A Vision of the Mermaids" produces a perspective which is, as Hopkins wrote of Keats, "without any noble motive, felt at firsthand, impelling him to look below its surface".[25] But for all the archaic diction, luxurious sensuality and secondhand allusions, Hopkins's early poems reveal, however fleetingly, how their author will ultimately create such poems as "The Windhover". What Hopkins said about Keats applies equally well to his own early work: "even when he is misconstructing one can remark certain instinctive turns of construction in his style, showing his latent power."[26]

It soon becomes apparent to a reader of both these early poems and the Journal kept concurrently by the poet that there exists a dichotomy between the blend of religiose idealism found in the poetry and the precisely, even scientifically, observed realism of the Journals. Hopkins can write thus in "A Vision of the Mermaids":

"...the west had grown
To an orb'd rose, which, but hot pantings blown
Apart, betwixt ten thousand petall'd lips
By interchange gasp'd splendour and eclipse."

But in the early Journal we find this description:

"On further side of the Witney road hills, just fleeced with grain or other green growth, by their dips and waves foreshortened here and there and so differenced in brightness and opacity the green on them, with delicate effect. On left, brow of the near hill glistening with very bright newly turned sods and a scarf of vivid green slanting away beyond the skyline, against which the clouds showed the slightest tinge of rose or purple."[27]

The Ruskinese realism, the fidelity to detail and the careful and apt matching of language with object in the

Journal remain at odds with the melodramatic representations of purely ideal worlds in Hopkins's early art.

An "instinctive turn", however, is reached with the poem "Barnfloor and Winepress".[28] The poem is significant for a number of reasons: there is, albeit unsatisfactorily, a mingling of the real with the ideal, the "leafless, lifeless, dry" vine is transformed into the "sweet Vintage of our Lord", but more importantly, Hopkins chooses the eucharistic elements as a means of yoking together the previously disparate spheres of physical and spiritual. The spiritual vision is still fragmented; the real sits uneasily alongside the ideal, but the vehicle chosen - the sacrificial eucharistic symbols - is most significant. Further, Hopkins's sensory awareness is coupled with the idea of a transcendent Christ in his use of metaphor:

"Sheaved in cruel bands, bruised sore,
Scourged upon the threshing-floor;
Where the upper mill-stone roof'd His head,
At morn we found the heavenly bread...
...For us by Calvary's distress
The wine was racked from the press..."

The tensional play between symbol and reality, between type and individual detail is striking, if unresolved: the poet

holds both ambivalently in the context of the poem. The sense of duality-in-unity is still lacking: Hopkins yet has to reconcile his sensuous apprehension of the variety of the world, its distinctive individuality, with his commitment to a transcendental unity, God. As Bump writes: "his search for the patterns which unified single objects or sets of objects, and far more general laws of aesthetic organisation in nature was a quest for the evidence of the divine force responsible for unity on earth as well as in heaven".[29] The source of that pattern is hinted at in the last lines of "Barnfloor and Winepress":

**"We are so grafted on His wood."**

Hopkins displays at this relatively early stage a mature eucharistic thinking: the eucharist is a perpetual re-enactment of Christ's salvific deed in which all mankind is implicated. But beyond this, the poem reveals how Hopkins could imaginatively associate the idea of the mystical Body and Blood of Christ in the eucharistic elements with the rest of nature. The wheat and the grapes certainly are materially "real", but the pull of the poem is towards their metaphysical representation, as if they were already participating in the mystical Body of Christ.

As early as June 1864, Hopkins wrote to E.H. Coleridge:

> "The great aid to belief and object of belief is the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Religion without that is sombre, dangerous, illogical, with that it is – not to speak of its grand consistency and certainty – loveable. Hold that and you will gain all Catholic truth."[30]

The Catholic concept of the Real Presence provided Hopkins with a means of reconciling that ambiguous dualism of spirit and matter apparent in the early poems and Journals. In his essay on Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Walter Pater stressed that "practically, the church of the Middle Age by its aesthetic worship, its sacramentalism, its real faith in the resurrection of the flesh, had set itself against that Manichean opposition of spirit and matter, and its results in men's way of taking life...".[31] Hopkins eventually made the discovery that with centuries of Catholic iconography at his disposal he could create a truly sacramental symbolism in which the real genuinely participates in the ideal. This revolt against dualism was an essential part of his conversion to Catholicism; that conversion had painful repercussions within his family and in an apologia to his father, Hopkins makes an important stand for his acceptance of the doctrine of the Real Presence:

"This belief once got is the life of the soul and when I doubted it I should become an atheist the next day. But, as Monsignor Eyre says, it is a gross superstition unless guaranteed by infallibility. I cannot hold this doctrine confessedly except as a Tractarian or as a Catholic: the Tractarian ground I have seen broken to pieces under my feet. What end then can be served by a delay in which I should go on believing this doctrine as long as I believed in God and should be by the fact of my belief drawn by a lasting strain towards the Catholic Church?"[32]

The appearance in 1864 of three religious poems by Hopkins which he termed in a letter to his friend Baillie as "being of a very Catholic character",[33] marked the beginning of a new style and subject matter. The specific attractiveness of the doctrine of the Real Presence for Hopkins lay in the mingling of real and transcendent worlds, having at its core a metaphor which partakes of the reality it represents, and thus acts as a paradigm for a sacramental poetry of nature. We see in Hopkins's poem "New Readings" (1864) the same material phenomena as in "Barnfloor and Winepress" and the same still completely unresolved tension between the physical and metaphysical worlds: the grapes and wine, the corn and grain are not discerned with the meticulous fidelity to detail and the concrete one finds in the Journal and essays of this period,[34]

but rather they are conceived metaphorically, or more precisely, typologically.

The influence of Butler's Analogy and also Keble can be felt to be behind such poems as "Barnfloor and Winepress" and "New Readings": the grapes and corn are but the "types and instruments of real things unseen", namely the Body and Blood of Christ. These early poems are indicative of a disctinctly Tractarian sensibility and a Tractarian sacramental system. They indicate Hopkins's acceptance of the belief that God uses external symbols and sensible signs of transcendent mysteries to convey to man things which are eternal, but there is as yet no intellectually grounded faith, neither theological nor literary, in the integrity of the sacramental symbol, that is, in its capacity to reconcile spirit and matter, idea and word, paratactically. The correspondences between sphere and sphere so precisely and carefully delineated by Keble are felt by Hopkins, but not apprehended rationally.

The move in the early poetry towards typological representation is echoed in the Journal: the word "type" becomes of great importance for Hopkins, since the discovery of types leads to a perception of "composition", or the unifying order of the whole, and beyond this to a sense of unity which is evidence of God's presence. The search for the typical, those "certain forms which have a great hold on the mind and are always reappearing and seem imperishable, such as the designs of Greek vases and lyres..." [36] was a

search by Hopkins for meaning amidst the atomistic detail of everyday life recorded in the Journal. Increasingly aware of the importance of "metaphysics" or religion as the ultimate source of unity, Hopkins began to be more critical of mere love of detail, "that kind of thought which runs upon the concrete and the particular, which disintegrates and drops towards atomism in some shape or other."[37]

It is erroneous to say, however, as Jerome Bump does, that the biblical concept of the "type" becomes the dominant paradigm for Hopkins. This is to misconstrue the meaning of Biblical typology and its significance for Hopkins. The Tractarians in rediscovering the works of the early Church Fathers such as Origen and Augustine, discerned the significance of patristic typology for their more symbolic mode of Biblical criticism: since God governs the whole of history, the realities of the Biblical text have a divine reference to other events of history, as well as having a literal meaning. As Aquinas writes:

"God, the author of Holy Scriptures, has power to give meaning, not only to words (men can do this) but also to things. Thus (in the Bible) as in all fields of knowledge words have meaning, but here also the very objects which words signify also have a particular meaning of their own. The first meaning whereby words signify things is their literal or historical sense. The meaning whereby the things signified by

> the words signify other things is said to be their spiritual sense, which is based upon the literal sense and supposes it."[38]

It is this quality of the Bible and its imagery on which centres Hopkins's attempt to reconcile the spiritual and the literal. In the Bible the religious and secular are entirely reconciled in the sense that all human activities are both religious and secular and summed up in the life of Christ. The persons and events, as well as the words, have tongues, so that the episode of the Jews, freed, wandering and coming to the Promised Land is an historical event, but it is also a sign or type of other realities such as Christ's liberation from the dead and the individual soul's liberation from sin through the waters of baptism. The realities of Jewish history are an image, or figure, of other realities that are still to come. However, Auerbach's concept of "Figuralism" is broader than the notion of strict biblical typology since it encompasses the analogical applications of biblical type to all forms of literature. He maintains that:

> "...figural interpretation establishes a connection between two events or persons, the first of which signifies not only itself but the second, while the second encompasses or fulfils the first. The two poles of the figure are separate in time, but both, being real events or figures, are within time, within the stream of historical life".[39]

Thus, the link for Auerbach is a spiritual one, the connection is not primarily chronological or causal, but is a unity within the divine plan, and it is this aspect which most concerns Hopkins in his search for unity, the law, or "composition" which brings together the whole. Bump's assertion, then, that the concept of the "type" is Hopkins's dominant paradigm is invalid: Hopkins's interest in typology is but one of the converging "probabilities" which lead ultimately to a full grammar of assent.[40] The probabilities of these formative years include, as we have seen, an increasing interest in the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence, the symbolic value of which to Hopkins at this time cannot be overstressed. It is precisely within this context of symbol that Hopkins finds his maturing authentic theological and poetic cadence.

Bump opines that the imagery of Victorian religious mediaevalists such as Hopkins and Christina Rossetti contained, "...traditional vertical correspondences between earthly objects."[41] But what differentiates typology from symbol is that, according to Auerbach, typology "relates to an interpretation of history - indeed, it is by nature a textual interpretation - while the symbol is a direct interpretation of <u>life</u> and originally, no doubt, for the most part, of <u>nature</u>."[42] So that the relationship of type to anti-type is essentially <u>lateral</u>, a relationship of one res to another res. Bump seems to have confused the issue. Hopkins's typological interest is merely a part of the greater search for the "vertical"

relationship between the real and the ideal, which centres not on the type, but on the symbol, and in particular the symbol in the Coleridgean sense. Symbolism for Hopkins is the dominant issue, focusing at this time on the eucharistic metaphor, where an affinity is established between the real, visible event or "res", and a more real and invisible event.

Hopkins's poem, "Rosa Mystica", is the last "apprentice" work before the poet's authentic cadence is discovered in "The Wreck of the Deutschland". The former poem, for all its failings, is an accomplished piece of writing, bringing together most of the principal positive aspects of Hopkins's early poetic method: typology, symbolism and Catholic iconography, and some of its negative attributes also. The poem focuses, significantly, on the symbol of the rose and not, as Bump would have it, on the rose as "type". Hopkins is not concerned here to establish horizontal parallels between historical events, but conversely a vertical union of the earthly and the metaphysical, a mingling of the descendental and the transcendental. As J.A. Galdon has pointed out in his book, Typology and Seventeenth Century Literature (Paris, 1975) frequent Biblical allusion is not typology and neither are fragmentary and merely illustrative uses of images. Typology, in its strictest sense, includes a number of essential and distinguishing elements: the historical realism of both terms of the typological relationship must be apparent. Hopkins's rose (despite Bumps's

ingenious reference to the "Song of Songs": "I am the Rose of Sharon") is not meant to have historical veracity as "type", but rather poetic and theological value as symbol. Typology must include the relationship of shadow to reality, the notion that one pole of the typological reference must be a fulfilment, a forma perfectior of the other. Hopkins's rose is not a completion, but rather its meaning is to be found in the profusion of signification the symbol gives rise to. Coleridge reminds us that in the symbol there must be no one-for-one meaning; the true symbol's value is never proscribed. Finally, typology must make apparent the divine resonance and correspondence of the type and anti-type within the biblical theology of history. Hopkins very deliberately mingles the symbolic "meaning" of the rose, so that none is dominant: Hopkins's chosen symbol refuses categorisation. It is at once symbolic of Christ's mystical body, the suffering Christ on the Cross, Mary the Mother of Christ, the perfection of physical beauty, earthly and spiritual love: the symbol resists delimitation, and as such is more correctly Romantic, than as Bump would have it, mediaeval. There is little suggestion here of Keble's highly structured analogical system of correspondences, or of Keble's conviction that "only a mere hair's breadth separates us from the eternal world",[43] since Hopkins's speaker in the poem tries to step into the world of total metaphor, to become himself a part of the sacred mythopoesis he has represented. Indeed, if there is a failing in this poem, it is one of balance: as with the poem "Barnfloor and Winepress" the metaphorical realisation,

the ideal world, assumes undue importance. The focus on the colour and shape of the blossom in the second half of the "Rosa Mystica" is surmounted, as the literal vision is subsumed, by the symbolic; the search for the purely spiritual vision and its attainment is necessarily mysterious and eludes "translation": the rose's "place is a secret and shut in the skies". But Catholic eikonography traditionally holds diverse beliefs in an equilibrium of resolved tension, demonstrating unity: how Christ is both God and man is shown in the eikon of the Virgin and Child. This equilibrium still eludes Hopkins: Hopkins's imagery in "Rose Mystica" is "typical"[44] rather than particular. The rose has no distinctive details, it is only a type of the species, rose, and as such provides an instructive contrast with later poems of great detail.

If Coleridge's polar metaphor describing the imagination and its workings is not yet accessible to Hopkins, we can discern the latter poet struggling towards a concept of tradition in this poem which bears a striking similarity to Coleridge's basic act of the imagination. Von Hugel's definition of tradition as being "the greatest multiplicity in the deepest possible unity"[46] is matched by Coleridge's conception of tradition, like the imagination, in terms of a magnetic field, whose essential characteristic is an opposed relation between negative and positive poles, which helps us to grasp its plural structure yet its essentially

unitary operation. The Oxford Movement attracted Hopkins and others by offering what T.S. Eliot called the "historical sense", that sense of "the timeless and the temporal together" which makes a writer "traditional", something more than an individual talent. Hopkins's attraction to the metaphysical and Romantic preoccupation with the individual personality (notice the refrains of "Rosa Mystica") is here matched with a mediaevalism represented by Keble, Pusey and Newman, that of surrendering himself to a reality infinitely greater than his own. The "continual self-sacrifice," the "continual extinction of personality"[47] is the kind of sacrifice Hopkins was trying to make when he joined the Society of Jesus, and it is only at this time that the "timeless" and the "temporal" are realised paratactically, rather than ambivalently, in his poetry.

The move towards this realisation can be discerned in "Rosa Mystica" for, despite the imbalance, there exists in the poem the model for Hopkins's future style and subject matter: the Incarnation. The transcendental and descendental movement of the poem is synthesised in the convergence of the unknown and known. Hopkins's imagery unites the upward movement of man to God in the first half of "Rosa Mystica" with the even more pervasive descending movement of God to man in the second half of the poem. Here is the key to Hopkins's sacramental imagery. The transcendental movement is clear from the outset: the rose is elevated from its origins in "earth's mould" to heaven and eternity, running

"in crimsonings down the cross-wood!". The symbol becomes the vehicle for re-enacting a sacred event; so that matter and spirit are fused organically. But, as in Robert Browning's "Abt Vogler" the descending movement of the Incarnation becomes apparent: "And the emulous heaven yearned down, made effort to reach the earth/As the earth had done her best, in my passion to scale the sky." As Pusey puts it, the beatific vision is to be an indissoluble union of the imitative and the symbolic,[48] and Hopkins's imagery unifies what appear to be collections of details, by a combination of the imitative and the symbolic, the incarnational and the transcendental which he identifies as the "co-existence of realism with broad conventionalism" in "Middle Age Art".

Echoes of Coleridgean thought are to be found in Pusey's advice about the Old Testament prophecies, advice which applies equally to Hopkins's art at this juncture:

> "In the word, as in the works of God, impression depends, not so much on <u>single objects</u> as on their <u>continuation</u>... the whole effort is made up of numerous other parts...take these prophecies singly, nakedly as men are now wont to do, apart from the whole system, and the impression will be diminished".[49]

The origins of Hopkins's "authentic cadence" are multifold, a combination and convergence of probabilities, but the

complete grammar, "the whole system", is not yet realised. The restoration of that union of religion and imagination cannot yet be effected, because the "single object" the transcendent ideal realm glimpsed in the eucharistic metaphor and in the metaphor of the rose, still dominates. Further, as Arnold states:

"Below the surface-stream, shallow and light,
Of what we <u>say</u> we feel - below the stream,
As light, of what we <u>think</u> we feel - there flows
With noiseless current strong, obscure and deep
The central stream of what we feel indeed."[50]

(My underlining)

The "surface stream" of Hopkins's beliefs at the time of his conversion to Roman Catholicism can be understood in terms of Newman's distinction in the <u>Grammar Of Assent</u> between dogma, which is "discerned, rested in, and appropriated as a reality, by the religious imagination", and the same dogma "held as a truth, by the theological intellect".[51] We seem obliged by Newman, as Coulson points out, to distinguish a first order use of religious language, that of faith, imagination and worship - from a second order use, that of belief, profession and explanation Both Hopkins's poetic and religious "beliefs" are, at this stage, indistinct: the "central stream" is still to be explored.

## 52
## "The Strong Unfailing Flow...": 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' and Jesuit Training

Hopkins's attraction to a somewhat arid asceticism in his "Oxford" poems is apparent on a superficial reading; what emerges from these poems on a closer reading, however, is a subtle but insistent repudiation of this Tractarian preoccupation with "other-worldliness". Running counter to the dominant transcendental strain of such poems as "Barnfloor and Winepress" is a concern for regeneration through the things of the real world: the water imagery of the first stanza of "New Readings" is echoed by the opening lines of an untitled poem, also written, significantly, in the spring of 1864:

"He hath abolished the old drouth,
And rivers run where all was dry
The field is sopp'd with merciful dew."

Similarly, the final lines of "New Readings" suggest Christ's refusal (and by extension, the poet's) to escape the reality and suffering of this world. Hopkins's Tractarian sentiment is still not fully expunged, however, for he can write:

"We shall be sheaved with one band
In harvest and in gathering
When heavenly vales so thick shall stand
With corn that they shall laugh and sing."[53]

and:

"I have asked to be
Where no storms come
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,
And out of the swing of the sea."[54]

But the "sharp and sided hail" of the latter poem is not merely an idiosyncrasy of Hopkins: it is, with the other images, a tentative self-realisation of the value of the "descendental", of this-worldliness, and the first indications of an individual voice.

Hopkins had written earlier in "Half-Way House":

"I must o'ertake thee at once and under heaven
If I shall overtake thee at last above."

His first step toward overtaking God under heaven had been his discovery of the immanence of God in the Host of the Mass, a discovery which was to be expanded into a sense of the omnipresence of God in nature in the post-1875 poems. But for the moment, the tendency is to conceive of God as

"above" nature; there is no simultaneity of apprehension of the immanent and transcendent, of word and experience.

Newman wrote in one of his Tracts in 1835:

> "A revelation is religious doctrine viewed on its illuminated side; a Mystery is the selfsame doctrine viewed on the side unilluminated. Thus religious Truth is neither light nor darkness, but both together; it is like the dim view of a country seen in the twilight, with forms half extricated from the darkness, with broken lines and isolated masses. Revelation, in this way of considering it, is not a revealed system, but consists of a number of detached and incomplete truths belonging to a vast system unrevealed, of doctrines and injunctions mysteriously connected together."[55]

Newman's conclusion, that "considered as a mystery", Revelation is "a doctrine lying his in language" perfectly anticipates Hopkins's burgeoning poetic method, since is it by means of his struggling with words and the intellectual meaning underlying the emotional response to the doctrine of the Real Presence, that he comes into acquaintance with and recognises the fact of the Incarnation. The truth is obscurely revealed, not on a systematic basis, but as "the gift half-guessed, the gift half-understood". Thus, there is a gradual realisation on the part of Hopkins that the

encounters in common life with this mystery of incarnation, are pointers, or signs of the reality of what it depends upon - the Incarnation of God in Jesus; the Eucharistic presence of Christ is initially limited to the sacred Host, and although this remains the central sign, poems such as "The Starlight Night" and "Hurrahing in Harvest" demonstrate the sacramental presence of Christ, redeeming and sanctifying all created being.

The climax of Newman's argument in the Grammar of Assent is his belief that what precipitates the certitude of religious assent are not single arguments of irresistible certainty, but a convergence of probabilities appealing to both the intellect and the imagination, and acting by "arguments too various for direct enumeration..., too powerful and concurrent for refutation", in order, ultimately, to "elicit one complex act both of inference and of assent".[56] Hopkins's imaginative and emotional responses to the doctrines of Incarnation and the eucharistic presence of Christ are part of a Newmanesque convergence of probabilities, amply demonstrated in the early poetry. But what is missing as yet is an intellectual grounding to authenticate that imaginative assent, for in a Coleridgean sense the whole of man's Reason - intellect, imagination, emotions - must be brought into play, but within the framework of authority which will guarantee that assent. Roman Catholicism for Newman provides a social framework for imagination, and not an authoritarian substitute; a means of growth and an

external or negative safeguard against rudimentary error in making that assent.

The development of Hopkins's thought towards the creative tension of feeling and thought properly integrated is to be found in a journal entry of 1874, the importance of which as a prelude to the subject matter and style of the nature poems is matched only by its resemblance to a passage of Coleridge's already quoted in Chapter 1.
In October 1874 Hopkins and a friend visited St. Winefred's Well at Holywell, near St. Beuno's College and after the excursion Hopkins wrote this:

"The strong unfailing flow of the water and the chain of cures from year to year, all these centuries took hold of my mind with wonder at the beauty of God in one of His saints, the sensible thing so naturally and gracefully uttering the spiritual reason of its being (which is all in true keeping with the story of St. Winefred's death and recovery) and the spring in place leading back the thoughts by its spring in time to its spring in eternity: even now the stress and buoyancy and abundance of the water is before my eyes."[57]

Coleridge takes the same subject, a spring, and writes in The Friend:

"Truth considered in itself and in the effects natural to it may be conceived as a gentle spring or water-source, warm from the genial earth, and breathing up into the snow drift that is piled over and around its outlet. It turns the obstacle into its own form and character, and as it makes its way increases its stream. And should it be arrested in its course by a chilling season, it suffers delay, not loss, and waits only for a change in the wind to awaken and again roll onwards."[58]

Coleridge's metaphor is more elaborate, but the qualities of both passages are similar. In both writers the literal action of the spring is the starting point for an imaginative exploration of the nature of Truth: we are made to look at the world dialectically. Tension is deliberately created between the physical fact and the metaphorical idea, the dynamic opposition is not a victory for one side or the other (in some of Hopkins's earlier poems, the idea dominates) but a kind of active reconciliation. Both writers make us aware that Truth works with, and like, nature: just as the natural spring "increases its stream" because of the melted snow, in Coleridge's passage and just as the spring at Holywell is given an extra dimension through St. Winefred's death and recovery, so the dialectical process in things leads to a synthesis: a reconciliation in a more powerful state, or higher reality, "its spring in eternity". Thirdly, both passages carry a distinct emotional charge:

both Coleridge and Hopkins are seeking to express a mystical quality at the heart of experience: something that is common to us all, but beyond common reason or common language. It is a perception of the mystery of our own being - "took hold of my mind with wonder", with irresistible power to "awaken" - and by analogy, of the divine Being. The key word is "gracefully": Hopkins at last comes to the realisation that the sacramental signs of the presence of Christ in the universe are not limited to the sacred Host but are everywhere in the universe. It is exactly that central experience celebrated in Part IV of "The Ancient Mariner" when at the beauty of the sea-beasts, the Mariner feels a "spring of love gush" from his heart, "and I blessed tham unaware", and when Hopkins in Stanza V of "The Wreck" writes, "I kiss my hand/To the stars...For I greet him the days I meet him, and bless when I understand."

Hopkins is here re-creating the world through his imagination and thus realising the Coleridgean distinction between the Primary and Secondary Imaginations: just as God, the "infinite I AM" originally created and continues to create the world, so the imagination of the poet, the "secondary" imagination, is a special, shaped and conscious form of this primary act, which "dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; ...it struggles to idealise and to unify. It is essentially <u>vital</u>, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead".[59] The shaping force of Hopkins's imagination in conjunction with an intellectual understanding of

the Sacraments will allow him to develop in "The Wreck" his authentic cadence. Shelley in his Defence of Poetry observed that our greatest weakness as modern Western "civilised" people was that we lacked "the creative faculty to imagine that which we know". In "The Wreck" Hopkins's rational apprehension of the meaning of Sacrament underpins the early, emotional sacramentalism to produce a subject matter and method at once theologically and poetically alive. Hopkins's struggle to unify the converging probabilities of religious and literary faith into some sort of assent, mirrors the reconciling Coleridgean mind at work. Indeed, when Coleridge asks his readers in Chapter XIV of the Biographia Literaria to enter upon the reading of his poems, with "that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith" he is as aware as Hopkins of the need for "assent" to worlds which are quite "other" than the Utilitarian world of Coketown.

In a 1944 issue of The New Republic, W.H. Auden wrote: the society of Jesus "turned an aesthete, no better or worse than half a dozen bright young men of the sixties and seventies, into a unique and serious artist".[60] The "Spiritual Exercises" of St. Ignatius Loyola and Hopkins's understanding of Roman Catholicism provide him and his poetry with a context and a content of deeply felt meaning, where previously there had been only feeling. Close contact with the Tractarians stimulated Hopkins to embrace the same religious ideals they cherished: growth in holiness and union

with God. But the strong Tractarian emphasis on ascetism and upon God's transcendence left little room for the burgeoning sense of the immanence of Christ which Hopkins clearly feels and expresses in his Journal observations on nature. The problem of reconciling this duality occasions for Hopkins a search directed towards bringing himself into conformity with the requirements of his belief: a need to order the affective will in accord with the elective. Hopkins's understanding of the relationship between his poetry and his beliefs is similar to other Christians of the time. The conflict between poetry and belief is seen, for example, in Tennyson's "The Palace of Art" and "The Lotus Eaters"; like Tennyson, Hopkins does not escape by artifice into a sensuous elysium, but chooses to live out his duty among "the kindly race of men".

Hopkins, then, hoped to achieve in Coleridge's words, "a balance or reconcilation of opposites" between intellectually held belief and poetic feeling. The two are not irreconcilable, since Coleridge had demonstrated that the rational element - the conscious thought - is the form or rules of the natural organic process of feeling. There must be according to Coleridge in poetry, "not only a partnership, but a union; an interpenetration of passion and will, of spontaneous impulse and voluntary purpose."[61] We see for the first time in "The Wreck" Hopkins's attempt to reconcile the two vocations, as poet and priest, by giving a spiritual content to romantic symbol and making it a sacrament of the Word present in nature and the

Christ-self. Those German critics most important to Hopkins such as Novalis, saw Romanticism as a mediaevalist movement animated by Christian spiritualism, and in "The Wreck" Hopkins paradoxically advances the sacramental tradition by infusing the form of the romantic symbol with the content of mediaeval Sacramental thought. As one critic has put it:

> "Hopkins was a symbolist, but not of any nineteenth century school, nor of any twentieth century school either. He is a symbolist of the school of St. Bonaventure, and of all his Christian successors till the end of time."[62]

Hopkins's search for a unity of sensibility means that in "The Wreck of the Deutschland", the operation of romantic symbol takes on a religious meaning. Eliot suggests in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" that the romantic symbol does not express the self as personality but embodies the common and traditional experience of humanity. The poet must develop a consciousness of tradition in literature because,

> "...what happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual progress of self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality."[63]

Tradition becomes an objective correlative for the romantic self, confirming the value and meaning of the self. The

objective correlative with which Hopkins identifies by sacrificing his personality is the natural revelation of the Creator, who is present in the world he has made his symbol, the objective correlative of Himself. The idea that we know something of God by his creation is Biblical, but it is perhaps made more acute to Hopkins the poet by Romantic theory. The world into which God has come, and for which he has sacrificed himself, is an imaginative reconcilation of the transcendent and the descendent. Hopkins is able, therefore, to embody his insights into human and external nature in an objective correlative that is at once an imaginative and an actual confirmation of them. The resulting symbol, which he calls inscape, becomes a kind of sacramental presence of "him that present and past,/Heaven and earth are word of, worded by."

"The Wreck of the Deutschland" is certainly the first example of Hopkins's mature poetic method: it is a method which unites Coleridgean philosophy with Catholic eucharistic theology, and refines both through Jesuit training. The principle or perspective which organically integrates the sensuous delight and the religious vision in Hopkins's poetry is not, as many critics have supposed, Duns Scotus's philosophy. The alacrity with which Hopkins seized upon "the copy of Scotus on the Sentences in the Baddely library" is matched many years later by the enthusiasm of many critics of Hopkins who see Scotistic philosophy as the universal "cure-all" when it

comes to interpreting the poetry. However, Hopkins's references to Duns Scotus are few and they are more enigmatic than his use of inscape and instress. Hopkins left some dozen clear references to the Subtle Doctor in his poems and prose writings, but these references only hint at what it was that tied Scotus to his sense of inscape, or that swayed his "spirits to peace".[64] The only reference in Hopkins's Journal which connects Scotus with the concept of inscape is in July 1872 when Hopkins writes:

**"At this time I had first begun to get hold of the copy of Scotus on the Sentences in the Baddely library, and was flush with a new stroke of enthusiasm. It may come to nothing or it may be a mercy from God. But just then when I took in any inscape of the sky or sea I thought of Scotus".**

The relationship between Scotus's thought and the concept of inscape is, despite all the critics who point to inscape as the link in the relationship, an undefined one. All that can be postulated of the Hopkins-Scotus association is that in Scotus we find some kind of reciprocal affinity between sense experience and spiritual experience that could be taken as an echo of the idea of instress; that in Scotus there is an emphasis on the real and concrete even in the highest mysteries of religion; and that there is a tie between Scotus's idea of individuation, "haecceitas", and Hopkins's concept of "pitch", and a connection between that concept and Scotus's stress on the will as determining the

self. Conclusions beyond these concerning the relationship between Hopkins and Scotus must rely on conjecture.

Leonard Bowman argues that, "Hopkins himself did not claim to be an accurate interpreter of the thought of the Subtle Doctor and considering the difficulty of Scotus's thought, one could hardly expect Hopkins to be entirely faithful to the precise thought of Scotus."[65] It seems necessary to go further: Hopkins was a fallible student of Scotus and may well have juggled Scotistic ideas to express an insight that has its roots elsewhere. In the so-called "nature sonnets" of 1877 Hopkins displays an empathy with one of the two mediaeval "schools" of philosophy, the Augustinian, and the writings of one of its major followers, St. Bonaventure. The sacramentalism of the Journal is recapitulated in these poems, but in a new key thanks to Hopkins's theological training. The other mediaeval "school" with which Hopkins was closely associated was the Aristotelian: the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas formed the doctrinal basis of the Council of Trent, the foundation of post-mediaeval Catholicism, and Hopkins as both Catholic and Jesuit had to study the sixteenth and seventeenth century followers of Aquinas, Suarez and Molina. If one adds that Thomism enjoyed a revival under Popes Pius X (1842-1878) and Leo XIII (1878-1903) and was actively encouraged in Catholic seminaries then it becomes obvious that Hopkins would have been steeped in Thomist thought and perhaps explains why his "discovery" of Scotus meant so much to him: his was a reaction not so much <u>against</u> the often quoted "dry" scholasticism of Thomism, but rather <u>for</u> the

elements which in Scotistic thought provided a balance or reconciliation between Dominican and Franciscan philosophy. Although it can be shown that some of Hopkins's most significant concepts about the Eucharist agree with Scotus's theology, it is still true to say that in the main, Hopkins's theological position basically agreed with the thinking of the Council of Trent.

It is necessary to demonstrate before examining "The Wreck" in detail, the closeness of several Thomist and Scotistic ideas, since many critics have blindly assumed the total influence of the latter on Hopkins whilst ignoring the absolutely crucial importance of Thomist thought to the poetic method created by Hopkins. Scotus's theory of the univocity of being, for example, is often cited as the basis for Hopkins's resolution of the transcendental and descendental. Scotus asserts, in opposition to Thomists, that being is univocal, defining a univocal concept as one whose unity is sufficient to involve contradiction if it is both affirmed and denied of the same subject. But the opposition to Thomism is more verbal than real. For if a univocal concept is defined in this way, St. Thomas would have no difficulty in admitting what he meant by being is univocal. Moreover, being as Scotus understood it is univocal in every sense. Similarly, the parallel between the Thomistic notion of <u>existence</u> and the Scotistic notion of <u>thisness</u> needs to be emphasised, particularly in the light of those critics of Hopkins's poetry who abuse the term "haecceitas" as if it were the key to all

interpretations. Both Scotus and St. Thomas decline to lose themselves in abstractions, but constantly lead us back to the real world by an emphasis on the individuality of the existent. Scotus does bring out forcibly the unique character of individuality; nontheless we miss in him the recognition of the fundamental identity of individuality and existence which is the distinguishing mark of the metaphysic of Aquinas. Aquinas states quite clearly that while the principle of individuation of corporeal species is matter, the general principle of individuality is substantial existence or subsistence. Finally, Scotus assigns a certain primacy to the will over the intellect, and much has been made of this in Hopkins criticism, but the common contrast between the alleged voluntarism of Scotus and the intellectualism of Aquinas is a rather superficial antithesis. As D.J.B. Hawkins puts it, "it amounts more to a personal preference in consideration than to an abstract difference of doctrine".[66] Scotus is careful to stress that intellect and will are not distinct, but one reality within the soul, and in terms of the existence of God, both Scotus and Aquinas assert that the most real desire of a person must be to enter into communion with such a being, although the fulfilment of this desire must depend on the will of God to communicate himself.

The purity of Aquinas's thought concerning sacramental theology is mitigated by the subtlety with which he treats the Eucharistic presence of the dead and risen Christ; this brings a

particular humanity to his philosophy. Aquinas's concern with the Sacraments generally, and each Sacrament in particular, encompasses four principal areas: he discusses the Sacrament as the sign and cause of grace, the locus, or place of encounter with Christ; the effect or gift of grace; the liturgical minister and the rite of celebrating the mystery; and finally, the recipient and his mode of entering the mystery. St. Thomas's teaching on the Real Presenc contains the directive vision for all Eucharistic thinking of the three levels of reality experienced: what we see and hear; what that points to; and the further ultimate reality into which we are introduced. As one writer has put it writing of the eucharistic philosophy of St. Thomas: "the secret sap of the whole thing is the love of Christ",[67] an observation which can equally be applied to "The Wreck".

Aquinas insists on the Sacrament being the means of man's own incorporation into Christ. Man is bound together in a visible union, of which Christ is the head, and consecrated in him to the Church's life of worship, again expressed in visible and Sacramental forms. The Incarnation, death and Resurrection of Christ become one and continuous with the visible prolongations of these in the life of the Church's members. To explain how this is achieved Aquinas invokes the long established theory that the symbol participates in the reality that it represents. Through the sacramental representation of Christ's death and resurrection the recipient of baptism is actually inserted into the historical event itself. Thus Hopkins can perceive almost instantaneously the similarity and ultimate unity of

the experience of himself and the nun, the process of redemptive suffering. What Hopkins, via Aquinas, realises is that the whole work of salvation has been achieved once and for all by Christ and yet this is an inaugurated eschatology, still in the process of being worked out in a hidden manner in history:

"The dense and the driven Passion, and frightful sweat,
Thence the discharge of it, there its swelling to be,
Though felt before, though in high flood yet -
What none would have known of it...."[68]

The kingdom of heaven has come, but it is still the leaven hidden in the meal. The mystery of salvation as Aquinas, and ultimately Hopkins, present it corresponds to this. Successive generations and individuals are incorporated into, and radically transformed by this unique event in history, which continues in and through the Sacramental life of the church. The meaning of that event is reasserted in the combination of gesture and word that makes up the Sacrament in the moment of its application to man.

Thomistic Sacramentality, then, provides the foundation of Hopkins's poetic method in terms of subject matter: the sacrifice of the Mass is the reconciliation of transcendental and descendental. "Nowhere else in the realm of reality do we find things that are so absolutely finished in themselves, so complete, and so divine as are the

Sacraments, which, on the other hand, are left so entirely to man's activities for new fertilities and new perfections. This is the whole sacramental mystery, and the Eucharist is the most perfect instance of it."[69] But this same sacramentality in its combination of act and spoken word affords Hopkins a basis for the creation of a new style. As he puts it, "the sensations of the eye are given in space, those of the ear in time".[70] Speech, being invisible, with no existence in space, tends to force the imagination back into that metaphysical realm from which the Word eternally originates. But as language generates drama, so the Word is enacted in the Sacrament of Incarnation. Hopkins in particular must have been conscious of the many parallels between the communal experiences of literature - the "reading aloud" of ancient and mediaeval cultures - and religious ritual. Just as he felt the necessity of restoring the mediaeval religion, Hopkins responded to some of the oral traditions with which it was identified. In other words, Hopkins countered the autonomy of the artistic imagination with the older idea of poetry as rhetoric: "Why do I employ sprung rhythm at all?" Hopkins wrote to Bridges, "Because it is...the native and natural rhythm of speech, the least forced, the most rhetorical. My verse is less to be read than heard...it is oratorical, that is the rhythm is so." Aquinas's emphasis on the ear can be demonstrated from his hymn "Adoro te", a hymn which Hopkins translated thus:

"Seeing, touching, tasting are in thee deceived,
How says trusty hearing? that shall be believed:"[71]

The Aristotelian conviction that poetry belongs with music as an art of temporal movement is made available to Hopkins not only through the Sacramental hymns of Aquinas, but also in the Aeolian harp imagery of Coleridge and the other Romantic poets. Keble in his Lectures on Poetry consecrated the harp image for the Victorians; T.S. Eliot in "Burnt Norton", however, declares:

"Words move, music moves
Only in time; but that which is only living
Can only die. Words, after speech, reach
Into silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
The stillness....".[72]

Eliot shares with Hopkins the belief that music has such spiritual as well as formal powers: the musical analogy becomes central to Hopkins's definition of poetry, so that words such as "measure", "timbre", "melody", "air", "cadence", "pitch" pervade his discussion of poetic art. The concept in Hopkins's poetry that similarity of sound in words "begets" similarity of meaning, so that phonic harmony generates semantic harmony, is echoed by Eliot in his assertion that "Only by the form...can words or music reach/the stillness....". The higher meaning of the music of a poem is an idea much explored by the Romantic poets in their recalling of Longinus's

assertion that harmonious word music makes us receptive to sublimity. Indeed, Newman claimed that the "perfection of the intellect" has "almost the beauty and harmony of heavenly contemplation, so intimate is it with the eternal order of things and the music of the spheres."[73] So, time and movement are necessary for pattern, which in its wholeness partakes of "the stillness...". The artist's task is to order the elements of temporal experience to obtain a glimpse of that pattern which is a reflection of the ultimate pattern, eternity. As Vonier has said, "the Sacraments...are left to man's activities for new fertilities and new perfections...", and Hopkins's word-music is designed to explore and convey that sense of the possibility of a radically different order of time and experience which is one of the goals of Catholic Sacraments. Hopkins sensed that the mediaeval age was far more alive than his own to the power of the spoken word, particularly in the Sacraments, but in oral traditions generally. It is this power which Hopkins refers to when he writes to his brother in 1885 of his theory of poetry as <u>performance</u>:

> **"Every art then and every work of art has its own play or performance...books play, perform, or are played and performed when they are read...Poetry was originally meant for either singing or reciting...sound effects were intended...",**[74]

and he goes on to say of poetry that, "till it is spoken it

is not performed...".

The word "perform" here is of great significance, for the liturgy of the Sacraments is essentially an act, a doing of a mystery: in the Upper Room, Christ said, "Hoc facita in meam commemorationem" - "Do this in remembrance of me", an intermingling of word and gesture. Similarly, in many of his poems, Hopkins rejuvenates the ancient metaphors, the integration of his word-music reinforcing the unifying power of the metaphors, causing the reader to conceive anew the metaphors which are at the heart of Sacramental theology: "This is my Body; This is my Blood"; "the Word made Flesh".

"The Wreck of the Deutschland" seems to explore and to demonstrate what T.S. Eliot in "Burnt Norton" described as the "co-existence" and what Coleridge termed a "bi-focal existing", that is, the reconcilation of the metaphysical with the physical. Hopkins strives to continue an emotional apprehension of the timeless with the intellectual aspect of the same; Hopkins's religious preparation is perhaps the psychological basis of his ability to reconcile in his poetry the truths of his faith with appropriate feeling about them. He carefully cultivates in himself what one could term an organic unity of sensibility. He keeps his whole soul ordered to remain affectively aware of his religious belief and of its objective correlative in human and external nature. The habit of religious meditation to train affective response which

Hopkins learned from the "Spiritual Exercises" of Loyola may have been of great value in his devotional preparation for writing Christian and sacramental poetry, but the informing spirit of "The Wreck of the Deutschland" is the eucharistic theology of St. Thomas Aquinas comprehended by a Jesuit priest who is also a Romantic poet in the Coleridgean tradition. To deny the possibility of such a reconcilation on the grounds that one cannot entertain emotion concerning intellectual beliefs surely offers a false alternative. It may be that for a rationalist, emotion and intellectual belief must be kept strictly separate, but there appears to be no reason why for others intellectually held beliefs cannot be used emotively in poetry. As F.R. Leavis and others have pointed out, Hopkins's vigour of mind greatly enriches the emotive experience to which it gives form.

The title of the poem is ironic, since "wreck" implies the initial wrecking, punishment and suffering out of which God brings salvation; the poem is not about this wreckage, but about salvage and salvation, and about the mystery of redemptive suffering. But as T.S. Eliot writes in "East Coker", "to be restored, our sickness must grow worse": the imagination must first dissolve, diffuse and dissipate, in order to re-create. What remains, however, after the dislocation is not a heap of broken images, but a recreation and affirmation of belief, which is both poetic and religious.

The sheer scale of "The Wreck of the Deutschland", referred to by Bridges as "the lion in the gate" of Hopkins's poetry, invites a multitude of different critical approaches, but the most productive interpretation, still largely ignored by critics, is to see the poem not simply as a vestige of Romanticism in the late Nineteenth Century, but as fundamentally affected by Thomistic Sacramental theology. The latter gives a perspective on the poem and the poet's method and acts as the principle on which "The Wreck" is built.

In the Summa Theologiae, St. Thomas Aquinas writes this:

> "...the Sacrament...is the thing ordained to the purpose of sanctifying our sanctification; there are three phases, namely the cause of our sanctification, the passion of Christ; the essence of our sanctification, which consists in grace and virtue; and the ultimate goal of our sanctification, eternal life...therefore, a Sacrament is a commemorative sign of what has gone before, I mean the passion of Christ; and a demonstrative sign of what is being brought about in us through the passion of Christ, that is, grace; and a prognostic, that is, a prophetic sign, of the future glory."[75]

Every Sacrament announces something: it brings back the past, it is the voice of the present, it reveals the future. Through Sacraments historic acts of centuries ago are renewed with reality. Also, and significantly, we are told by Aquinas that a Sacrament is not a fixed being radiating forth grace and

life, but rather it is a power which is a flux and which is incomplete as a natural being, because the sacramental world which lies between the creature and the uncreated God is neither nature nor divinity but partakes of, and is consubstantial with, both.

This tri-partite structure of a Sacrament lies behind the substance of "The Wreck" and is the poem's performative model: the past is brought back in the literal passion of Christ, "Five! The finding and sake/And cipher of suffering Christ" and in the typological figure of the suffering nun, "the cross to her she calls Christ to her, christens her wild-worst Best"[76]; the voice - quite literally - of the present is the speaking voice of the poet and the nun, both revealing in and through themselves the effects of grace, "I steady as a water in a well, to a poise, to a pane,/... roped with...a vein/...a pressure, a principle, Christ's gift"; and the future glory is revealed to the poet in the "transfiguration" of the nun, and revealed by him in the imagery of resurrection in the final stanza of the poem, "Let him easter in us, be a dayspring to the dimness of us...". The analogy between Sacrament and poem, however, is more complex: the sacramental realm adumbrated by Aquinas finds a literary corollary in Coleridge's theory of the Imagination, whereby in Coleridge's concept of the Imagination as "stereoscopic" the mind stands at the intersection of two different perspectives as a symbolising activity, and as "...a repetition...of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I

AM." The sacramental world and the metaphors and symbols of the imaginatively created poem share the characteristics of focusing through the very particularity of an event the light of eternal truths. The sacramental symbol is only a part of the greater whole it reveals, but it implies the totality. Coleridge suggests, like Aquinas, that in a sacramental symbol, the material and temporal become a lens through which we can bring into focus for an instant the eternal abstraction of which it is a fractional and incomplete part; he goes on:

> "...the Sacred Book is worthily entitled the Word of God. Hence too, its contents present to us the stream of time continuous as life and symbol of eternity, inasmuch as the past and the future are virtually contained in the present... . In the Scriptures therefore both facts and persons must of necessity have a twofold significance, a past and a future, a temporary and a perpetual, a particular and a universal application. They must be at once portraits and ideals."[77]

The vital reconciling power of God's imagination emerges in the incarnate Word - and by extension, the Sacraments - and his utterance, like that of Scripture is "more than metaphorical". Hopkins's poetry attempts to communicate the Word inscaped in human and external nature and becomes in itself a sort of eucharist, a benediction of Hopkins's own sense of the immanence of God and a form of preaching, of distributing the Sacrament of the Word. The poet shares the work of the creative God and is, as Jacques Maritain has written, "an associate of God in the making of works of beauty".[78]

The tradition of Thomist Sacramentality provides a specific context for the "time" of the poem; the tradition and conventions associated with Aquinas's teachings on the Sacraments also provide a means of understanding the apparent lack of unity in "The Wreck", the intensely personal response of the poet and the paradoxical workings of Providence. One critic has called "The Wreck" "startingly unconventional"[79] because of the seeming absence of any unifying factor both within the poem and between it and other works of Hopkins. The work is, as Bump says, "startingly unconventional - until we find the right conventions".[80] Various models have been invoked as a way of enabling us to comprehend more fully Hopkins's aims and methods in the poem, amongst which one finds Romanticism, the poetry of meditation, and Loyola's "Spiritual Exercises", but one of the most pervasive and useful sets of conventions in the poem are those features associated with the Sacramental tradition. That is not to say that in placing the poem in the context of Thomist thinking all other contexts and conventions are excluded: the sacramental response, however, underlies the Romantic and the meditative poem as a precise and special focus on infinity and the divine. The context and conventions of Catholic Sacramentality enable us to move beyond vague intimations of the relationship between the poet and the symbol of the wreck, to a consideration of Hopkins's poetic method as an indication of the healthy survival of the religious imagination in the later nineteenth century.

Sacraments have been defined as "trysting-places with Christ" and in Aquinas's consideration of the four fold structure of Sacraments he asserts that they are the locus or place of encounter with Christ, "the moment in and out of time". The title and epigraph of the poem suggest a representation of the nuns and the wreck of the Deutschland, but the reader finds instead a direct and personal address to God:

"Thou mastering me
God! giver of greath and bread..."

The imagery of storm and the poet's personal response to it, "I did say yes/O at lightning and lashed rod", are mingled with images of great calm, and with obscure references to fear and ecstasy. We are tempted to agree with the observation that Hopkins is unable to integrate successfully "the objective physical literalness" of the wreck with the "subjective and spiritual matter that precedes and follows it".[81] On closer inspection, however, the coalescence of subject and object becomes apparent. Hopkins is careful to stress the significance of the means whereby earthly poet and transcendental God meet: "the heart of the Host". Part One of the poem is under-pinned with the poet's awareness of the point of coalescence: "Over again I feel thy finger and find thee"; "I greet him the days I meet him...", "I found it, a winter and a warm", and the theological doctrine from which the Real Presence is derived: the

Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of Christ. The encounter with Christ is not to be found in the quiet of Eliot's rose garden in "Burnt Norton" or in the stillness of Fra Angelico's "Annunciation", but is for Hopkins, "the intense moment", burning with "flame of incandescent terror": Hopkins realises the storm "so vividly that he is in it, and it is at the same time in him."[82] The cataclysmic meeting is expressed in physical terms and is reminiscent of the symbolic union of the real and the ideal in Yeats's poem "Leda and the Swan"; but the physical reality of the occasion for Hopkins is subsumed by the greater spiritual reality to which it gives rise: "To flash from the flame to the flame then, tower from the grace to the grace". As with the Sacrament proper, so with the poem: the metaphysical and physical realms inter-penetrate and we are constantly prevented in Part One of "The Wreck" from "placing" the poem. The natural and elemental forces of the first two stanzas give way to a surreal vision, "Thou knowest the walls, altar and hour and night", which is identifiably detailed and yet an abstraction; the landscape of Wales in Stanza Four and the stars and sunset of the following stanza seem constantly in the process of being metamorphosed from fact to metaphorical idea; the psychological "storm" and "wrecking" of the poet is the precursor to a transformation of the whole person into a new relationship with God. In other words, Hopkins keeps constantly in front of us the irreducibility of the Sacramental experience, which is mirrored in the complexity of the metaphors and language chosen to convey that

experience. It is a poetic realisation of Newman's conviction that revelation is "a doctrine lying hid in language", since in Part One of the poem and elsewhere we are forced to discern the structure of the imagery to apprehend the higher meaning, just as Hopkins struggled physically and then artistically to incarnate his experience of Christ the Word in the language of the poem.

The "moment" of encounter with a reality outside time is achieved for Hopkins through pain and effort; it is the struggle which we see encapsulated in the poetry, and it is this sense of disconfirmation and sacrifice which is at the heart of the eucharistic theology of St. Thomas. Aquinas clearly identifies Sacrament with sacrifice and the Eucharistic Sacrament is chiefly the offering of the sacrifice of the Mass, in which Christ offered and continues to offer himself on the altar. In Part One of "The Wreck" Hopkins aligns himself with the suffering Christ, perhaps because Christ's suffering is also part of the poet's vocation: the unification of sensibility, of choice and desire, the elective and affective wills, is a moral as well as an aesthetic act. If Christ suffered to restore the integrity his creation had lost to Original Sin, so does the poet suffer to maintain in himself the creative unity of sensibility necessary to create a whole and organic work in which God's truth can live. As Coleridge explains,

> "the poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity."[83]

Hopkins's great cry of assent in Part One of "The Wreck", "I did say yes/O at lightning and lashed rod..." is an assent to the complex integrity of the Sacramental experience, and a realisation that this experience is never fully understood until lived through. The assent to disconfirmation obliges Hopkins to dispense with the reductive language of plain, literal and univocal meanings for that of apparent contradiction, successfully resolved: "thou art lightning and love, I found it, a winter and warm...".

The paradox of the divine encounter for Hopkins is the paradox of Christian truth; that is, according to the philosopher Kierkegaard, "truth as it exists for God. The standard of measure and the end is superhuman; and there is only one relationship possible: faith." What we discern in Part One of "The Wreck" is a Kierkegaardian act of faith, or in Newman's words, an imaginative and therefore "real" assent, a decisive transformation of the whole person, imaged in the sloe of Stanza Eight. Kierkegaard sees imagination as "what providence uses to get men into reality, into existence, to get them far enough out, or in, or down into existence." It is what is necessary for man "to soar higher than the misty

precint of the probable" and in so doing, is the means of bringing the reason and other faculties into equilibrium and simultaneity.[84] It is the imagination according to Coleridge and Aquinas which brings the whole soul of man into activity - "what we cannot imagine, we cannot, in the proper sense of the word, conceive."[85] Thus, Newman argues, as Coulson points out, that it was not the religious organisations or opinions of the early Christians which were responsible for the vitality of their faith, but the image of Christ which gave life to their preaching. This it is in "The Wreck" that brings together truths which "appear to diverge from each other".[86] What we and Hopkins respond to is the whole: "As God is one, so the impression which He gives us of Himself is one; it is not a thing of parts; it is not a system:... It is the vision of an object."[87] This is Christ, - "the very Object whom it (the divinely - enlightened mind) desires to love and worship - the Object correlative of its own affections."[88] It is the image of what first creates faith and remains so, re-created in the poem.

Kierkegaard maintained that the transformation of the whole person into a new relationship with God could only ne reached subjectively in the conflict of personal experience: the truth could be apprehended only, said Kierkegaard, by someone who lay struggling for his life upon seventy thousand fathoms of water, and it is this image of the soul in extremis which unites the experience of the poet in Part One with the nun in Part Two of "The Wreck". The poet, however, struggles

in the grip of his storm before coming to loving submission: there is a sense in which Hopkins assents with the elective will, whilst the loving consent of the affective will, the voluntas, is slow to follow. His "yes" is not simultaneously from head and heart, whereas the nun reads the meaning of the storm correctly and responds without question:

"Ah! there was a heart right!
There was a single eye!
Read the unshapeable shock night
And knew the who and the why..."

It is the instant response of both wills which is her glory, since God requires man's response and correspondance.

The inner assent must, however, have an outwardly corresponding gesture as acknowledgement of the individual's response to the loving God: "I kiss my hand/To the stars...", just as in the celebration of the Sacrament word is conjoined to manual gesture and act. The importance of speech in the poem, the act of "wording" the divine experience, is common to both Hopkins and the nun: after the poet's "yes" is Stanza Two, the poem is an exploration of the poet's developing gift of tongues, as he responds to his own experience and to that of the num who "read" and "uttered" God. What Hopkins perceives, and the poem celebrates, is that by using names the nun sacramentally transforms her destruction: "The cross to her

she calls Christ to her, christens her wild-worst best." The nun sees the storm, like the world, in time and substance, as word of God; it is also worded by him, given form and made articulate. The nun, then, says more than "yes", more than kisses her hand: she has the ability to give Christ a new birth and so she, like Mary, may intercede for us and articulate our dumbness. The idea that all things are articulate is central to Hopkins: one must have the nun's "single eye" to read them aright, to hear their speech and the spiritual insight to decode them. As Hopkins wrote: "All things therefore are charged with love, are charged with God and if we know how to touch them give off sparks and take fire, yield drops and flow, ring and tell of him...". [89] Like the nun, Hopkins attempts to translate word into the Word, to tell of God's grace, to incarnate the Sacramental moment. Thus the poet "utters" forth in complex pattern the words of Stanza 28 which culminate in "Christ":

"But how shall it...make me room there:
Reach me a...fancy, come faster -
Strike you the sight of it? look at it loom there,
Thing that she...there then! the Master,
Ipse, the only one, Christ, King, Head...."

The density and obscurity of this passage is one of the consequences of Hopkins's attempt to express that which is inexpressible. As T.S. Eliot pus it: "Words strain/crack and sometimes break, under the burden...". The stanza demonstrates

how a religious mystery ultimately exhausts and defies the power of language. The problem of how to represent the nun's discovery of the infinite in the finite, the presence of God in the storm, proves a futile search for Hopkins. The "Fancy" or the ability of the mind to discover parallels, to make suitable comparisons, fails him and all he can do is to ask the reader himself to imagine God's infinite presence. It is impossible to select one name for God's sublimity, because one single title is insufficient: "the Master, Ipse, the only one, Christ, King, Head." Hopkins confronts in this experience the limits of language, something that is "Beyond saying...past telling of tongue", a "past all/Grasp God". The poet's meditation on the dying nun's experience is suddenly broken into and reduced to ragged unfinishable fragments by the real vision of Christ that is the moment of death. Prickett comments significantly on this stanza:

"This experience of disconfirmation where, in the moment of crisis, all the titanic strivings of artist or protagonist are weighed in the balance and found wanting is at once Biblical and Platonic. But what in the Bible, or in a mediaeval poet like Dante, is fundamentally a mode of religious experience, becomes in the work of Coleridge... or of Hopkins, simultaneously a mode of aesthetic climax in which the whole meaning and structure of the work of art is changed and transformed. Failure is not merely an essential for individual spiritual growth, it is simultaneously a psychological and aesthetic necessity."[90]

The climactic point of the poem, then, is at once religious, psychological and aesthetic: whatever organic wholeness is, or is not, achieved by the conclusion of the poem is a by-product of the mysterious drama of Fall and Redemption through Grace, which is formulated by Aquinas as the second principle of Sacramental theology, the effect or gift of grace. Hopkins divides this gift into three, seeing grace as "quickening, stimulating, towards the object, toward good: this is especially in the affective will..."; secondly, "corrective, turning the will from one direction or pitting into another...: this touches the elective will or the power of election and is especially the grace of the mature mind..."; and finally, "elevating, which lifts the receiver from one cleave of being to another and to a vital act in Christ: this is truly God's finger touching the very vein of personality, which nothing else can reach and man can respond to by no play whatever... the counter stress which God alone can feel...the aspiration in answer to his inspiration".[91] In Stanza Three of "The Wreck" Hopkins gives poetic voice to this doctrine:

"My heart, but you were dove winged...
To flash from the flame to the flame then, tower from the
grace to the grace."

The flame of torment, the pain of corrective grace, which Hopkins goes on to say is "a purifying and a mortifying grace, bringing the victim to the altar and sacrificing it",[92] is transformed for him through the Sacramental "heart of the

Host" and its perfecting grace. The flame of torment is metamorphosed into the flame of redemptive fire: "With an anvil-ding/And with fire in him forge thy will...", just as the pain of corrective grace becomes the "tower" of elevating grace, "the grace of the Holy Ghost", which Hopkins saw as "the acceptance and assumption of the victim of sacrifice."[93] But the total self-realisation in submission to God, achieved sacrificially by the nun and striven for by the poet, is never fully achieved by Hopkins in this poem, since the only parallel indentification between Christ and mankind which the poem celebrates is that between Christ and the nun at the time of judgement. "The Wreck" describes repeated attempts to strive for this unification, but as one critic observes, "it can only be reached "half" since the struggling soul is yet bound to its sinful body."[94] Whatever the ultimate critical judgement on the nature of Hopkins's religious and poetic achievements, in the context of the poem the dynamic effect of grace is stressed as an important unifying factor. For Aquinas the sacrament is essentially a dynamic thing: the grace which it causes flows from Christ into the recipient through the sign itself in the moment of its application. It produces new life, hence the emphasis given by Hopkins to the verb "make" in Stanza Ten: "Make mercy in all of us...", and to the concept of generation in Stanza Thirty: "For so conceived, so to conceive thee is done/But here was heart-throe, birth of a brain." The new life produced is the life of Christ, extending into the members of his mystical Body.

Hopkins readily creates from his theological understanding of the meaning of grace a stylistic feature of his poetic method which acts as a potent source of imagery and as a fundamental means of unifying the different "levels" of the poem, literal and metaphorical. We feel, rather than see, the physical pressure extended by the "finger" of God in Stanza One of the poem, the same "finger" referred to by Hopkins in the foregoing quotation from the Sermons. Similarly we feel, and hear, the fire and lightning imagery in the poem rather than seeing it: the dynamic grace, the non-visual "fire of stress" laces the poem together.

The imagery of fire and water, sacramental elements of purification and transformation, predominates in the poem. The fire imagery is crucial in all its modulations to Hopkins's dramatisation of God's seeming duality, but actual unity, and subsumes all the paradoxical imagery of the poem. Hopkins demonstrates his idea of God as "lightning and love" by showing the fire of stress lacing the world with terror and with grace: God's actions, like physical fire, are all consuming, either in the destructive conflagration of the storm, or in the loving warmth of his "all-fire glances". In either "furnace", God tempers through grace the base metal of mankind: "With an anvil-ding/And with fire in him forge thy will...". But just as the white-hot metal of the forge is tempered and given shape by cooling waters, so the grace of God comes also as the life giving shower, "let flash to the shire", the awaited rains of "Spring". The final stanza of this poem celebrates this mystery of grace in the word "dayspring": "Let him easter in

us, be a dayspring to the dimness of us, be a crimson-cresseted east ...". We are reminded of nature's sacramental function, "wafting him out of it", but the adjective "crimson" suggests the "fire" of the Crucifixion, and anticipates the "gash gold-vermilion" of "The Windhover". The life-giving "blood" of Christ, spilled through the destructiveness of man, is paradoxically the means instituted by God in the Eucharist to perpetuate the work of grace. Hopkins's choice of adjective echoes the words of the hymn writer Isaac Watts: "His dying crimson like a robe/Spreads o'er his body on the Tree." But of more importance is the noun "dayspring", suggestive of the fire of light, celebrated in the rest of the stanza, and also reminiscent of the waters of grace. It seems more than co-incidental that David Jones in The Anathemata should bring together in one image various aspects of these last stanzas of "The Wreck", the notions of birth and redemption, the "waters" of the womb and the waters of grace, Mary and Christ:

"Marquis of demarking waters
warden of the Four Lands
from her salined deeps
from the cavern'd waters
(where she ark'd him) come."[95]

The central symbol of water in "The Wreck" has complex implications, since besides the sacramental associations, the use of the sea as an image of faith, common amongst poets such

as Arnold, is present here. Perhaps more important still, however, in a Darwinian climate is the notion of the fecundity of the sea: "...is the shipwreck then a harvest?" asks the poet, deliberately and paradoxically countering the "unchilding, unfathering deeps" of Stanza Thirteen. The complexity of the symbol is further added to by the allusion in Stanza Thirty-two to the sea as an image of man's mind, which has distinct echoes of a similar Wordsworthian image in Book XIV of The Prelude.[96] Both poets discern the interplay of physical and metaphysical, the interrelationship of "a mind/ that feeds upon infinity" with the "motionable mind" of man.[97] The levels of meaning in the symbol do not derive from Hopkins's deliberate concealment of its primary meaning, but from a desire to show the inherent and proliferating mystery of that which seems initially distinct, reducible and "certain".

Similarly, in Stanza Four we find these lines:

**"I steady as a water in a well, to a poise, to a pane,**
**But roped with, always, all the way down from the tall**
**Fells or flanks of the voel, a vein**
**Of the gospel proffer, a pressure, a principle, Christ's gift."**

Here literal fact - the mountain streams of Wales - is transformed into metaphorical meaning without losing the vividness of the literal. The life-giving "vein" of the Gospel's promise and offer of redemption, the "pressure" of

God's stress, the pressure of grace and of challenge, the fundamental "principle" of Sacramental truth, are spiritually the more intensely felt, because they are in part physically felt and seen. Here also we feel and understand the instress of grace through the mingling of the literal and the figurative: the meaning becomes clear through the structure of the image. What is common to Coleridge, Newman and Hopkins is the idea, stemming no doubt from Butler in both cases, that there is no break between the "natural" and "supernatural". Though they stand in a dialectical relationship to one another, they are, nevertheless, the two ends of an unbroken continuum. Thus Coleridge writes:

> "...as the lower part of the Coral consists of the same stuff of the rock to which it is attached - so here what the Calcereous stem is to the Coral, the Body is to the Soul... . What Nature is to the Natural Man, in all its particularity of Soil, Moisture, Air, Warmth, Light, magnetic attraction etc., that Christ is to the Souls of the Redeemed."[98]

In one of his most brilliant images, Coleridge illustrates the sheer complexity of interrelations which characterise his, and Hopkins's, thought; the passage could almost be an explanatory prose account of the latter half of Stanza Four from "The Wreck", so close is it in feeling:

"The small Artery in the Finger or the thread-like Vein in the Foot witteth not of the Blood in the Chambers of the Flesh, and but a small portion thereof doth it need or can it contain - yet by the never-resting Energy of the Heart, ever expanding to acquire, and contracting to communicate, is the distant vein fed, and its needful portion renewed, and the feeding Artery receives an aiding impulse in the performance of its humble ministry."[99]

The ability to demonstrate structural relationships through meaning is common to both Hopkins and Coleridge: through the patterning of the poem and the arrangement and shaping of images, we become acquainted with what that depends upon, and understand how Hopkins was able to declare on examining a blue-bell: "I know the beauty of our Lord by it".

Aquinas's third main concern with regard to an understanding of the Sacraments is with the liturgical minister and the rite of celebrating the mysteries. The priest of the church in his sacerdotal capacity, according to St. Thomas, is the image of Christ, considered as priest:

"The celebration of the Sacrament is a representative image of Christ's passion...the Altar is representative of the Cross itself on which Christ was offered up in his own nature... the priest carries the image of Christ in whose person and in whose power he pronounces the words in order to consecrate... and thus, in a certain way, the priest and victim are the same."[100]

In the same way that Hopkins as priest communicates the Word through the Sacrament, and acts a means of reconciliation between Christ and man, so Hopkins the Christian poet seeks to maintain the integrity of the religious and secular in his poetry through the grace of faith. Perhaps the suffering of Christ is also part of the poet's vocation, because the unification of sensibility, of choice and desire, the elective and affective wills, is a moral as well as an aesthetic act. Hopkins as priest-poet turns for his creative model to Scripture and imitates not only Christ - the supreme example of God's "reconciliation of opposites" - but also the Mediatrix of Grace, who "...makes, O marvellous!/New Nazareths in us...".[101]

The imitation, by the poet, of the eucharistic Christ immolated in the Mass is not fully achieved in "The Wreck", however. The complexity of the relationship between priest and poet, and in particular the priest's role in the poem, would lead the reader towards the assumption that the poetry itself of "The Wreck" effects the reconcilation between the two vocations. The importance of the Sacramental experience and the poet's struggle to "word" it within the inscape of the poem can be seen in Stanza Twenty-five of the poem:

"The majesty! what did she mean?
Breathe, arch and original Breath
Is it love in her of the being as her lover had been?
Breathe, body of lovely Death."

Hopkins asks the Holy Spirit to help him understand the nun's words, which recalls the "epiclesis" or invocation at the consecration of the Mass, when the priest calls down the Holy Spirit and changes the eucharistic elements. The model of the eucharist stands behind the poem in very many ways: the words and the elements of the Mass clearly signify sacrifice, which is echoed not only in the Biblical references to "the dense and the driven Passion" in Stanza Seven, but also in the wrecking and death of the nun which is prefigured by the divine sacrifice of Christ. Similarly, the eucharist is a re-presentation or memory of Christ's passion, which Biblical precedent Hopkins makes efficaciously present in his own and in the nun's situation. The redemptive character of suffering is proclaimed in the memorial of the Mass and in the remembered suffering of the nun, a memorial which in both cases stands for victory, the heroic deed, the final triumph: "Not a dooms-day dazzle in his coming, nor dark as he came;/Kind, but royally reclaiming his own...". If Hopkins's poetry is a form of preaching, of distributing the Sacrament of the Word, then Hopkins's purpose as poet-priest is to make the Biblical revelation present in his own experience, and through his poetry, in the situation of the reader also. Poetry, then, is a means of religious teaching and a vehicle of grace; it is elevated to the status of a sacrament, but in a far richer and denser sense than Keble had ever intended.

"The Wreck" poses a problem, however, for the celebrant-poet, for according to Aquinas, "the priest carries the image

of Christ, in whose person, and in whose power he pronounces the words in order to consecrate...". But in the second part of the poem it is the nun who "carries the image of Christ...":

**"Mark, the mark is of man's make**
**And the word of it Sacrificed.**
**But he scores it in scarlet himself on his own bespoken**
**Before-time-taken, dearest prized and priced - ..."**

It is she who "pronounces the words in order to consecrate": "Was calling 'O Christ, Christ come quickly':/The cross to her she calls Christ to her, christens her wild-worst Best" and, as Aquinas makes clear, "in a certain way, the priest and victim are the same." The priest-poet of the poem strains after that ultimate vision of Christ which is the moment of judgement, and momentarily the correspondences of the poem break down, threatening and ultimately damaging the integrity of the poem. Both poet and priest recognise the value of the "moment in and out of time", and attempt to word the Sacramental moment which is suggestive of a permanent and unchanging reality outside time. The meaning for artist and priest, caught between the timeless and the temporal, whose Art and Sacrament must reflect this precarious relationship, is fully integrated up to this point in the poem; but in the last stanzas of the poem the priest draws away and imposes a theological climax which is, in its somewhat forced theatricality, at odds with the earlier climactic point of Stanza Twenty-eight which is simultaneously the aesthetic and the religious heart of the poem.

This verse is a microcosm of Hopkins's work as a whole and an embodiment of his faith and vision in poetry. God is perceived as dominant and mighty, to which "mysterious certainty" both poet and man assent. Here nature and grace intermingle; here the imagination of the poet is conjoined to the figure of the nun in the cataclysmic moment when both are transformed by the grace of God. Momentarily and dynamically, the psychological storm of the poet fuses with the physical storm of which the nun is a part and Hopkins perceives in that instant the "Ground of being, and granite of it: past all/Grasp God...". But the religious climax is also the aesthetic: Hopkins uses words to embody all the seeming discordant complexity and the actual purposeful unity of both the poem and God at this point:

"But how shall I...make me room there:
Reach me a ...Fancy, come faster -
Strike you the sight of it? look at it loom there,
Thing that she...There then! the Master,
Ipse, the only one, Christ, King, Head:"

The breathless excitement and verbal "charge" of this writing is not a mere reflection of the poet's vision of a world apparently chaotic, lacking "grammatical structure" without the incarnate Word of God, although that idea is present; it is also the result of that vision of "mystery" which demands expression in words that embody and heighten its intense and distinct reality, but which also resists any attempt to arrest

it, and bring it wholly within grasp. We are made to experience the wrecking, confusion and disconfirmation as the prelude to an uprush of inspiration, in the broken syntactical structure of the passage which gives way to the firm, assertive procession of "names" for God. Here priest and artist are perfectly in union, so that we experience Newman's belief that "revelation is a doctrine lying hid in language": the complete meaning which is resurrected from the linguistic fragments of the first half of the stanza is a metaphoric embodiment of the theological doctrine of Resurrection. As in the sacrifice of the eucharist, so here in the poem nature and grace, art and faith vie with one another to express the great hidden truth.

In his consideration of Sacramental thought, Aquinas finally deals with the recipient of the Sacrament and the mode or way of entering the mystery: "The treasure never eyesight got, nor was ever guessed what for the hearing". Sacraments are in Thomist theology an extension of the Incarnation, and a variant of the mystery "- the Word was made Flesh....". The Son of God is the chief Sacrament and in his Incarnation realises the paradox of the invisible made visible and the resolution of the physical and the metaphysical realms. This mystery possesses, according to Hopkins, a kind of living continuity of application. Hence the speaker in "The Wreck", after asserting that "His mystery must be instressed, stressed", reveals that although the stress is in some sense historical - "It dates from day/Of his going in Galilee" - insists that it

transcends time itself "and rides time like riding a river". A good illustration of how Jesus's example transcends time is to be found in the figures of the nuns who offer their deaths to Christ, thus extending the ramifications of the Crucifixion in this world.

The mystery of death and resurrection is dwelt upon at length by Hopkins in "The Wreck" and centres upon the image of the rose in Part Two of the poem, which itself is a development of the image used by the poet in "Rosa Mystica". The nuns embody the sign in its fullness: the number of the rose petals is five, as is the number of Christ's stigmata:

"And these thy daughters
And five-lived and leaved favour and pride,
Are sisterly sealed in wild waters."

Bump comments on the significance of the nuns to Hopkins:

"By offering their deaths to Christ...multiplying the significance of the pentameral 'stigma, signal, cinquefoil, token', they became members of the communion of saints forever in heaven, petals of the mystical rose Dante saw in the Garden of God".

He goes on to observe that the symbol of the mystical rose is invoked in Part Two of the poem, "because it is the central mystery, the ultimate demonstration of the significance of the

deaths of the five nuns in the context of the tradition to which they dedicated their lives."[102] It is, moreover, central to Hopkins's condition in the poem: he not only seeks to enter fully that Sacramental mystery, "the heaven of desire", but also, through the experience of the poem, he looks for the assurance of the meaning of his own "death" to Anglicanism and earlier values and the significance of the tradition to which he has dedicated his life.

Hopkins acknowledged that "The Wreck of the Deutschland" "needs study and is obscure, for indeed I was not over-desirous that the meaning of all should be quite clear, at least unmistakeable."[103] Hopkins's attempt to preserve some mystery was not born out of a desire to create a private meaning in the poem, but rather a mediaevalist desire to preserve the awe originally associated with the paradoxes and mysteries of early Christianity. The similarity with the aims of such Tractarians as Keble, Pusey and Isaac Williams is striking: the Tractarian insistence on "reserve", on veiling the mystery of the Sacrament, is explained thus by Keble: no-one should "expose the sacred mysteries either of Nature or Religion to public view without regard to the temper and training of his hearers."[104] This "reserve" is usually achieved, according to Keble, through unusual and complex metrical schemes (in which Keble delighted), but the chief source of indirection in lyric poetry is Nature, acting as an analogy for God and as a mediator between man and God. Original metrical schemes and the natural world as the "half-way house" of God are dominant features of "The Wreck" and most of Hopkins's other poems of the seventies.

The way Hopkins chooses to enter the Sacramental mystery and to understand the nature of God is through paradox; "The Wreck" sets out to explore this paradoxical nature. But paradox for Hopkins is not simply witty illogical logic; it is rather religious paradox. The poet's very religion and methodology are paradoxical, but Hopkins persists to the underlying "plain truth": the cerebral pleasure of paradox is abandoned for the poet-priest's full dramatisation of ultimate and absolute coherence. In other words, Hopkins goes beyond paradox, following Rilke's advice: "Feel the depths of things: thither irony never descends."[105] As a convinced believer in absolute revelation, Hopkins adopts Rilke's attitude and the practice of the poetry demonstrates this. The terms and the method of paradox are employed by Hopkins to show how God's acts appear to man, but Hopkins strives towards the plain truth of God's actual unity of nature and purpose. God is "lightning and love...a winter and warm", but more importantly he is "throned behind/ Death...", "stanching, quenching ocean of a motionable mind...". We are made to come to terms with Coleridge's "adunating power" in the very technique used by Hopkins.

The Sacramental model, then, provides the reader with a means of interpretation of this highly complex poem, but we are also entitled to ask how the poem is unified and, indeed, if it is a unity. How are the psychological concerns of the poem related to the greater religious theme? Once again, Thomistic theology and the Romantic literary theory of Coleridge provide the paradigm.

As we have said, Aquinas defines very clearly and succinctly the three levels of reality which he deems to be present in all eucharisitc thinking: what we can see and hear; what that points to, that is, the metaphorical or spiritual reality; and the further ultimate reality into which we are introduced, the specific Sacramental grace, the union of charity. All three levels are present in the poem, the aim of Hopkins being the creation of an organic whole, based on what Coleridge termed those "self-circling energies of the Reason" which give birth "to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves".

What we see and hear in "The Wreck" is what strikes the reader on an initial reading or hearing: the naked, literal, at times primitive, quality of the poem is found in the bold word-painting and rhythms which attempt to convey the concreteness of the visible world. The physical storm, the mountain streams, the cloud formations at sunset are all realised as the primary level of the poem, the "real". Such initial impressions are vital to the truth of the poem. They insist that "The Wreck" is, first and foremost, about what it says it is: a narrative account of a shipwreck told with absolute directness. But the directness of the verse has nothing to do with "realism", any more than any work of art is "realistic". It is on the contrary highly stylised, depending for its power on a number of formal qualities, associated with the primitive literalness of the poem. Hopkins, after all, frequently adds his own details to heighten the drama of the factual newspaper account of the storm.

The first of these formal qualities is the emphasis on spatial movement: physical movement of speed, rising, falling, hovering, hanging and circling:

"Into the snows she sweeps
Hurling the haven behind..."

"Wiry and white-fiery and whirlwind-swivelled snow
Spins to the widow-making, unchilding, unfathering deeps."

Another is the stress upon sound: the words "wiry" and "white-fiery", for example, are not only stressed, but rhymed and thus seem to merge in one force. The alliteration of the hard "b" sounds in the expression "black-backed" conveys the violence of the sea, coupled with the rhyme of the harsh "ack" and "acked". The battle between the ship and the sand-bank is represented in the "b" sounds of "beat", "bank", "bows", "breakers" and "beam. The third quality exploited is that of rhythm: many of Hopkins's most striking "sprung" rhythms in the poem are imitations of the terrifying natural forces. For instance, the final line of Stanza Sixteen is basically anapaestic in rhythm, but the centre of the line is sprung on the word "buck", making the line itself "buck", like the wave: "with the burl of the fountains of air, buck and the flood of the wave."

The literalness of Hopkins's account of the wreck, however, emerges in many places into metaphor, in the same way that in

Part One of the poem, the mountain streams of Wales are, in the moment of the reader's perception of them as physically "real", being transformed by the poet into the waters of grace. There is a frequent passing between the actual world and the metaphysical "moment", in the same way that in the Sacrament a spiritual element is conjoined to a physical one. The very essence of the Sacrament is representative signification before all things, and the sacramental world which lies between the creature and the uncreated God is neither nature nor divinity, yet partakes of both. So with the poem we come to realise that it is as a whole a sign, a cipher of divine mystery, where the literal use of language does not exclude or supersede the metaphysical and symbolic use. In fact, the contrary is the case: sometimes, the figurative meaning is the literal meaning and cannot be separated from it. John Donne asserts that "the literall sense is always to be preserved," since it is "the principall intention of the Holy Ghost...And his principal intention in many places is to express things by allegories; by figures; so that in many places of Scripture, a figurative sense is the literall sense."[106] Scripture is the perfect and natural model not only for the Christian poet, but also for the Romantic self. Coleridge writes: "in nothing is Scriptural history more strongly contrasted with the histories of highest note in the present age, than in its freedom from the hollowness of abstractions...."; he continues:

"...by a derivative...but not a divided influence, and though in a secondary yet in more than a metaphorical sense, the Sacred Book is worthily entitled the Word of God. Its contents present to us the stream of time continuous as life and a symbol of eternity, inasmuch as the past and the future are virtually contained in the present... . In the scriptures, therefore, both facts and persons must of necessity have a twofold significance, a past and a future, a temporary and a perpetual, a particular and a universal application. They must be at once portraits and ideals."[107]

The metaphorical significance of Hopkins's poetry is that it communicates the Word inscaped in human and external nature. Also, Hopkins knows, like Coleridge, that this Word:

"...rides time like riding a river
(And here the faithful waver, the faithless fable and miss)

It dates from day
Of his going in Galilee;
Warm-laid grave of a womb-life grey;
Manger, maiden's knee,
The dense and driven Passion, and frightful sweat:
Thence the discharge of it, there its swelling to be,
Though felt before, though in high flood yet -
What none would have known of it, only the heart,
being hard at bay,

Is out with it!"

The poem, then, inhabits this extra-metaphorical realm, a product of the imagination which is the mediator between the creature and the uncreated. But like the Sacrament which is both anthropocentric and theocentric, "The Wreck" as poem concerns Hopkins's situation as an individual and as part of the universal schema. It is at the same time a portrait of a particular experience which Hopkins is determined to show has a perpetual application in man's struggle to express the ideal.

The ultimate reality into which we are introduced by the poem is the mysterious certainty of God, the religious paradox which Hopkins termed in a letter to Bridges an "incomprehensible certainty".[108] The journey which Hopkins recounts, in Part One of the poem, both in a literal sense and a figurative sense, is a voyage into the terra incognita, "the unknown, the reserve of truth beyond what the mind reaches and still feels to be behind."[109] It is this paradox of God about which the poet's mind circles restlessly, which is clearly at the heart of both Hopkins's and the nun's experience, and which forms the main structure and unifying factor of the poem. The superficial ambivalence of poem and subject is transformed by an underlying pattern which is esentially Coleridgean in conception. The critic John Pick observes that, in a manner, Hopkins "becomes Christ, and Paul and Austin and the nun are all participating in the life of Christ and re-creating the sacrifice on the Cross."[110] The unity is more complex than Pick's comment would suggest, however, since it is in the very structure of the poem

itself that the meaning is to be found: the inscaping or patterning of interlacing words and metaphors, but not the words or metaphors themselves, is an artistic reflection of the ultimate pattern. On the one hand in "The Wreck" we have the vividness and precision of image, and the distinctness of pattern in sound and metre, all of which utter God's firm reality and intensely immediate potent pressure. They give us the "clear formulation" which is absolutely necessary to an understanding of the mystery. On the other hand, however, motile and multi-dimensional words, and imagery which is principally non-visual and always sensuously complex, insist that the mystery is far beyond the reach of senses alone, that it is "the treasure eyesight never got, nor was ever guessed...". Above all, there is no expectation on Hopkins's part that somehow the paradox ought to be clarified and reduced to a single or univocal meaning. The tranquil, enfolding sea of faith in Arnold's "Dover Beach" is far removed from the destructive and creative ferment of the sea in "The Wreck of the Deutschland". Hopkins seems to put forward the idea that only by accepting the ferment, however, can we begin to realise the conditions necessary for religious growth. There may be words and myths which are simply uninvertible and in attempting to reduce them we impoverish the experience, as Coulson reminds us. Thus, the mysterious stress of God's grace through the world, the breadth, depth and penetration of it, its complex nature, and the unity of its purpose is reflected in the poem's structure, in its superimposed layers of meaning and levels of reality, which however varied, point

always to one meaning and return always to the same centre: "Ipse, the only one, Christ, King, Head." Within the form of this apparent paradox, this tension within unity, by saying and unsaying, Hopkins lives out the development of those beliefs, poetic and religious, which he has inherited: "Christ is in every sense God and in every sense man, and the interest is in the locked and inseparable continuation, or rather it is in the person in whom the combination has its place."[111]

It is possible, then, to discern how the poem is unified, but is the poem, finally, a union of charity, in a Sacramental sense? There are two problems, it would seem, which Hopkins does not fully resolve in "The Wreck" and which ultimately deny the organic wholeness which the poet is striving to attain. The first is the symbol of the wreck itself, and by extension, the relationship between the two parts of the ode.

The operation of Romantic symbol in Hopkins takes on a religious meaning. As we have said, the objective correlative with which he identifies by sacrificing his personality is the natural revelation of the Creator, who is present in the world he has made his symbol, the objective correlative of himself. Hopkins is able to embody his spiritual insights into human and external nature in an objective correlative that is at once an imaginative and an actual confirmation of them. The resulting symbol, inscape, becomes a kind of sacramental presence of "him that present and past,/Heaven and earth are word of, worded by".

Shipwreck is seen as an outward manifestation of a dark Providence by Hopkins, but it is singularly inadequate as a complete embodiment or correlative of the inner state described in Part One, since the resonances of the correspondence have not been fully worked out. We are asked to accept the notion of redemption and salvation rather than wrecking, yet it is the physical fact of wrecking, havoc and destruction which is to the fore in Part Two of the poem; Christian redemption dominates the conclusion of the poem, but the terms of the reconciliation are not in the wreck itself, rather imposed obstinately by the poet. The whole dualism of the poem - the nightmare and awakening in Stanzas Two and Three, the drowning and resurfacing, the winter and spring, the darkness of the physical and mental storm and the light of hope - suggests that some kind of redemption or reconciliation is possible, through the system of energies and symbols which compose the poem. The imposition of a Christian meaning and value on everything seems artificial, and like the "sloe" image in Stanza Eight, is too self-conscious, too much for its own sake and not enough for the integrity of the poem.

The second "problem" is the correspondence between Hopkins and the figure of the nun. We have seen that the poet draws away from immediate contact with the nun, and from the wreck itself in Stanzas Thirty-one to Thirty-five. The explanation for this lies in the ambiguity of the relationship amongst Hopkins, the nun and Christ. Hopkins strives for and ultimately fails to achieve a poetic integration of all three. At the climactic

point of the poem, the nun's vision of Christ is the poet's: despite man's awareness of his mortality, of his place in a world of constant flux, a Christian can transcend that tragic end through faith in an eternal spiritual life. But that Sacramental moment for the poet, is transitory, and like Henry Vaughan he realises:

"They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit ling'ring here...".

The parallel identification of Christ and man at the time of judgement is reserved for the nun; for Hopkins, the struggling soul is still bound to its sinful body. Whereas in the apocalyptic moment poet and nun are united, what remains for the Christian poet is the hope of resurrection through faith in Christ's mystery, and that faith is paraded with a compensatory intensity in the last stanzas. The moment of faith, the implicit creative act of assent, has not yet grown into that greater discursive adequacy known as "belief", but stubbornly remains theological cliche. It is only in the later poetry that Hopkins exemplifies an imaginative assent which he can neither sufficiently account for nor demonstratively verify, and is content to do so: "the very answer," he writes to Bridges, "is the most tantalising statement of the problem and the truth you are to rest in the most pointed putting of the difficulty."[112]

## '... love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth...': the poems of 1877-1880[113]

Hopkins's poems of 1877-1880 are often referred to as his "nature" poems, as if we can isolate the poetic and theological response to nature from the complex development of artistic method and religious assent which characterises Hopkins's work during this period. It is imperative to see in the sequence of poems written at this time, from "God's Grandeur" to "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves", an investigation and questioning of artistic and literary "faith": as the sacramental vision informs the theology, particularly with regard to a more sophisticated understanding of the eucharist, derived from Jesuit studies, so the poetic techniques, the deployment of symbols, the exploration of levels of reality within the poems, become more refined. Hopkins is still, to adopt Coleridge's metaphor, like the voyaging Mariner, making the journey out towards a "terra incognita", and like the Mariner, he encounters within himself and in the natural world the pleasures and the pain of man's post-lapsarian state, "the innocent mind and Mayday" which must confront "the blight man was born for."

In Part 5 of David Jones's In Parenthesis, "the man from Rotherhithe", looks "through all barriers, making as though they are not ... through all other things to ... 'The Paradise'...":[114] we are drawn into the man's imagination as he diffuses the scene in front of him,

recreating an alternative order of reality out of perceived reality. That the man is trying to recall in his imagination something of "home", and home is denoted by a pub known as "The Paradise", is indicative of a yearning for man's pre-lapsarian Edenic condition. Hopkins's poems of this period, like In Parenthesis, contain an aggregation of references to the pre-lapsarian Eden, which becomes more insistent as the fragility of the paradisal state is realised by two poets fully aware of man's destructive capabilities. It is essential, if we are to understand what constitutes the development of Hopkins's sacramental vision, that we place a poem such as "Spring" alongside "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves", for in the exuberant celebration of the multeity of nature can be found the seeds of doubt and despair which flourish in the later poem and in the logical extension of the poems of this period, the so-called "Terrible Sonnets". If Hopkins, in poems such as "God's Grandeur" and "The Starlight Night", invites us, Adam-like, to contemplate the wonder of creation, "all this juice and all this joy", then we are also invited to face with him in "Spring and Fall", Margaret's bleak discovery that "as the heart grows older/It will come to such sights colder/By and by". Like Eve to Hopkins's Adam, Margaret is the partner who contemplates in Eliot's phrase "the waste sad time": knowledge will come, "you will weep and know why"; it is an essential part of the spiritual education of the

fallen, human being and it is significant that this poem ends not with the contemplation of the "glassy peartree" blooming, but of the "worlds of wanwood leafmeal", the waste land of man's mortality. The dynamism of the hortatory, imperative verbs of the early "nature" sonnets - "Look, look up..."[115], "Have, get..."[116], "Buy then! bid then!"[117] - modulates into the more sardonic, strangely brooding vocabulary of "Spring and Fall" and "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves". The literary modulation is underscored by Hopkins's more sophisticated theological understanding of the sacrament of the eucharist derived from his studies in the Jesuit Theologate and the commencement of the Tertianship: the sustaining "heart of the Host" is reached through sacrifice; the sacrifice of the mass is a means of worship and glorification, but it is also an re-enactment of man's shame and an atonement for sin. It is unsurprising that the poems of this period are concerned essentially with the transition from childhood to adulthood, with the move from innocent intuition to the mature vision and rationale of the adult; above all, the poetry is preoccupied with the growth from inchoate feeling to knowledge and certitude:

> **"Ah! as the heart grows older ...**
> **... you will weep and know why..."** [118]

Just as the theologian in Hopkins confronts the difficulty in making the transition from faith to belief, so the poetry records and words that modulation

as the poet strives to render "the treasure never eyesight got" [119] in images of imaginative and rational adequacy.

Hopkins's maturing sacramental vision in these poems is precisely that: we are witnesses to a changing and developing poetic and spiritual method which does not reach its proper refinement until a poem such as "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire". The method of these "nature" poems is very much akin to that of "The Wreck of the Deutschland", but more controlled, because of the formal constraints imposed in several instances by the sonnet form. The reader's attention is first focused on the subtle linguistic shift from the dynamic, motile description of the octave to the reflective, conceptual language of the sestet: spectacle and meaning are yoked together by Hopkins, but the effect is curiously dissatisfying because we are allowed no breathing-space during which his lines might sink into us. The octaves of "God's Grandeur", "The Starlight Night" and "Spring" are so flamboyantly mimetic that the reader is distracted from the truthfulness of the vision offered by the sestets of the poems. In any case, the "vision" of such poems always looks rather cloddish and pedantic because the reader is told the meaning of such experiences by the poet, rather than being allowed to uncover it for himself. The language of the poetry shows us the poet's urge to explain, or to clarify meaning:

"... morning, at the brown brink eastward,
springs -
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods..." [120]
"Look! March-bloom, like on mealed-with-yellow
sallows!
These are indeed the barn..." [121]
"What is all this juice and all this joy?
A strain of the earth's sweet being..." [122]
(My underlining)

Even in "Spring and Fall" the heart of the moral drama is lost when Hopkins leaves us in no doubt why Margaret is weeping:

"It is the blight man was born for,
It is Margaret you mourn for."

The poem lacks the poignancy of, for example, Wordsworth's, "She dwelt among the untrodden ways", in which the little the poet can say about Lucy creates a gap for the reader just as her death left a void for him. The gap cannot, and should not, be filled, but Hopkins's poems of this period do not encourage an attention to what has been unsaid. Rather, in answering the questions posed by the poetry, Hopkins forecloses the metaphysical wrangle necessary to literary and spiritual growth, so that in his struggle to express the "mysterious certainty" at "the heart of the Host" we sense the conviction, but very little of the sacramental

mystery. We search in vain for the density and complexity of metaphysical utterance of "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" in the poetry of this period, a density which we as readers must question and unsettle and thus "half-create"[123] in Wordsworth's phrase, in order to understand the truth Hopkins is attempting to express.

If no one poem of this period has the splendidly resistant quality which is the mark of meontic art, then we may glimpse the mysterious reality of sacramental time through the lens of a group of images: taken together, they oppose the restless movement of much of the mimetic descriptive poetry, so that their effect is cumulative and, as in Hopkins's distinction between chromatic and diatonic art,[124] the reader is invited to juxtapose a series of apparent fixed images and to make an immediate reference between them. I have said that Hopkins's "nature" poetry must be read in conjunction with such later poems as "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves" and "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire", and if we are to see the method as a demonstration of a centrality of vision which lights the whole work, then it is vital we understand the architectural relationship of specific images to the complete poetic edifice.

Hopkins triumphantly concludes "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" with the assertion that,

**"I am all at once what Christ is ... and**
**this Jack, joke ...**
**Is immortal diamond."**

The production of the image, like that of the diamond itself, has emerged from a long process of tempering and refining which we see as early as "God's Grandeur" in the reference to the grandeur of God which is constantly renewed "deep down things", "like the ooze of oil/Crushed." And since Hopkins identifies himself with this "immortal diamond" it is appropriate that the diamiond's purity and longevity is made out of "man's last dust",[125] the very earth from which the poet's body will be resurrected in Christ. The nature of truth discovered in such a symbol is, like the diamond itself, multi-faceted, elusive, irreducible; the deployment of the image is indicative of the sacramental method itself, which constantly brings together diverse elements into constantly renewing juxtapositions in order to make "New-Nazareths in us."[126] We are required to grasp the "prepossession"[127] of a group of images and from apparently discordant particularities recover the sense of the whole and thus create a new inscape belonging to the whole. By "saying and unsaying" we come to "a positive result":[128] we apprehend how the cognitive may grow out of the intuitive vision. By grasping the structured convergence of individual images we can assent to the complex contuition of the symbolic "diamond" in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire".

## "Morning, Midday and Evening Sacrifice": "The Windhover" and the annihilation of self

The sacramental concept of poetry implied in "The Wreck of the Deutschland" is realised in "The Windhover" more satisfactorily, because more completely. Hopkins's consciousness of mysterious paradoxes in the symbol of the wreck and his attempt to reach beyond and beneath those paradoxes to express a unified vision partially defeats him. In "The Windhover", however, the poetic form chosen to express that Christological vision is more disciplined, imposing a tighter rein on the poet's imagination and the result is aptly remarked upon by Marshall McLuhan: "there is no other poem of comparable length in English...which surpasses its richness and intensity, or realised artistic organisation".[129]

The poem raises many questions of interpretation, and one way of assimilating the diversity of readings of "The Windhover" is to apply the principles of Sacramental theology discussed in my reading of "The Wreck of the Deutschland". They are particularly apposite in a discussion of a work of the intensity of "The Windhover", since the Sacraments assimilate complexity and ambiguity of meaning whilst affirming the existence of a primal unity, and this precisely defines the methodology of the poem.

The immediate "aspect" of the Sacrament is its material presence, its literal reality; the "sacramentum tantum" of

bread and wine. Hopkins is careful to explain to Bridges in a letter about "The Wreck" the importance of this literal aspect: "I may add for your greater interest and edification that what refers to myself in the poem is all strictly and literally true, and did all occur; nothing is added for poetical padding".[130] The octave of "The Windhover" attempts to inscape the heroic energy of the falcon in action and to capture the literalness of the physical flight pattern of the bird as observed by the poet:

**"I caught this morning morning's minion, king -**
**dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in**
**his riding**
**Of the rolling level underneath him steady air...".**

The initial verb "I caught", contains within its construction the central relationship celebrated by the poem, that between bird and man. The poet is the observer, the hunter even, who "captures" his elusive object; but the bird is hunter, too. "I caught" could as easily embody the sense of the poet being caught by the falcon as its potential victim. Hence, the poet's "heart in hiding" like the falcon's prey, "stirs", courts death and asks to be captured. The timid withdrawal of the poet is attracted to the heroic display of the falcon's physical presence. The opening of the octave suggests that the bird's mastery is only possible because the bird is so perfectly attuned to its surging elements; it conquers the wind-currents only by a disciplined adaptation to them.

Such an adaptation the man must seek in his own sphere in the sestet.

The abruptness of the move from the octave to the sestet is mirrored in the striking change of rhythm. As the bird falls, in pursuit of its prey, so it "buckles" its wings together and in the dive all its physical beauty - "valour", "act", "air", "pride", "plume" come together, are fused. The "blue-bleak" colour of the hovering bird is transformed in the dive to earth - "AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion/Times told lovelier...", just as the dull colours of the ploughshare and the embers are transformed by action to "Shine".

The second aspect of Thomist thinking on the Sacraments is the "sacramentum et res", that is, the reality produced by the Sacraments, the metaphysical signification. The sub-title of the poem, "To Christ our Lord" reminds us that "the most consistent "underthought" is Christological, that is, most of the metaphors point to Christ".[131] The central Ignatian concepts of import to the poem are closely bound up with the "underthought" of the poem: the chivalric metaphors recall the description in De Regno Christi of the followers of Christ as "Knights...bound by allegiance...chivalry...to live up to a standard of courage...an adult Christian is such, being not only baptised but confirmed (for Confirmation is spiritual knighthood), and at least the exercitant is, who must at this point advert to his sacramental promises, his engagements and bounden duty".[132] Also, as Hopkins writes, "the

first class of Christ's subjects...are called to follow him in his first design which was a life of worship; the other in his Passion."[133] The "drudgery and servitude", the annihilation of self, are preludes to re-birth. The concept of sacrificial incarnation, essential to Hopkins's understanding of Christianity, is symbolised in the fall from the heavens to the earth of the windhover, and the consequent Crucifixion, with eucharistic correspondence, is realised in the metaphors of the "blue-bleak" body which is broken or buckled and which releases the life-giving "fire" of mingled blood and water - "gash gold-vermilion".

The effect or gift of grace, the moral and third aspect of Sacramental theology, is closely related to the other aspects, and is particularly apparent in "The Windhover". Although bird and man are similar, the man can still "say more" than the bird. The poet can spiritually interpret and understand the activity of the bird so as to elevate it and himself, by asserting a convergence of the partial ideals (man and bird) in the single total ideal, Christ, a convergence only possible through sacrifice and fall. The echoes of disconfirmation and wrecking, uneasily worked out in "The Wreck" are heard here more completely and harmoniously. The aposiopesis of Stanza Twenty-eight, the climactic "moment" of "The Wreck", is exchanged for the poet's economical and yet polysemous use of the word "Buckle" in "The Windhover". The effect is much more satisfactory.

The word contains many possible meanings, all of which are essential to a poetic rendering of that sacramental "moment", the "moment in and out of time", and all of which convey Hopkins's complicated awareness of the bird as a natural creature and a partial symbol of Christ. The initial meaning of "Buckle" must be in the sense of buckling on the armour of God, the qualities of the heroic knight-falcon, in the poet's heart. Hopkins recognises those qualities of instinctive courage which he needs and lacks, and that those qualities are emblematic of the spiritual armour of God and the true knight who serves God. In this sense, the word is used in an hortatory way: Hopkins is asking, even demanding, something to happen which will ultimately produce results. Secondly, the word signifies combat, coming to close quarters, engaging the enemy. Hopkins pleads with and implores the hunter, the "Orion of light", to seize upon his heart, drag him from hiding to the life of full combat; a kind of death into life.

The third reading, however, of the word "Buckle" is the most important: the idea of falling and of breaking are simultaneously contained in this interpretation. We move from the physical presence of the bird in the octave to the poet's imaginative interpretation of that presence in the sestet: it is at once a "fall" from the heavenly bird to the earthly poet, an act of imaginative descent which partakes of, in a sacramental fashion, that Incarnational descent from God to man. But it is more: the "enormous

conjunction" of the physical with the metaphysical realm is effected in the dynamic "Buckle!". The supernatural intersection with the natural world causes, in its searing intensity, the natural order to be transformed, however, momentarily; and the poet to receive that fire of grace which is "more dangerous", because of the recognition that it entails sacrifice and demands commitment. The bird has acted its role as chevalier in the octave, a reflection or imitation of the real and highest chevalier, and although not a full symbol of Christ, in its partial revelation of Him points beyond itself to its source. It is sacramental in that it bespeaks, is informed by, and is an instrument of grace, and yet does not wholly contain divinity. It is a visible reminder that man may use nature, but must also go beyond it.

The descent in tone from the ecstatic wonder of the octave to the quiet, firm assertion of the sestet is a by-product of that grace; a realisation that, in the final image, Christ not only possesses the heroism of the bird, but also the lowly servitude of the man, and undergoes the ultimate sacrifice of pain and death. The glory to be achieved through suffering is clear: the "blue-bleak" embers are reminiscent of the dull colours of the falcon before its "act", and of the plough and earth before they are made to shine by "sheer plod". Hopkins emphasises that the "gold-vermilion" is the only brilliant colour, and that is achieved throught total self-sacrifice.

The fourth aspect of Sacramental teaching is the "res tantum", the union of charity, the ultimate mystical sense of divinity. Through the natural elements of bread and wine and through elemental nature, the participant has access to "Edenic time",[134] but this discovery of divinity is both rare and mysterious, as Hopkins makes clear in "The Wreck": "I greet him the days I meet him, and bless when I understand". Quite deliberately, in "The Wreck" and particularly in "The Windhover" we see Hopkins using paradox to understand the divine mystery. Hopkins's habitual method of resolving apparent contradictions is much in evidence in this poem, where the poet intensifies each side of a contradiction to the point where it is transcended: the mystery is resolved in a profounder mystery. The sonnet reaches its resolution of complexity and its heights of affirmation by descending to, and exploiting, the depths of paradox, imagery and tone. The potential of bird and man, partially similar, partially distinct, converge in the assertion of the highest sacrifice of all:

**"...sheer plod makes plough down sillion**
**Shine and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,**
**Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion."**

Hopkins enacts here Professor Coulson's observation that by the accumulation of such analogies the order of the Universe, the pattern, is apprehended, as distinct from being comprehended. That is to say, Hopkins believes in or grasps how it is, rather than understanding why it is, but by such belief he gains what comprehension he can.

Hopkins's method perfectly illustrates Newman's belief that "we steady our minds...by saying and unsaying to a positive result. We lay down that the Supreme Being is omnipresent or everywhere, and yet nowhere...He is ineffably one, yet He is exuberantly manifold."[135] The poem successfully articulates the concept of the Sacramental mystery by this technique: the truest heroism is that of sacrifice, the greatest conquest won by defeat, the highest flight achieved by fall. Out of the apparent paradox comes the affirmation of the "mysterious certainty", but unlike the imposed theological cliche of "The Wreck of the Deutschland", the object of the poet's assent in "The Windhover" lies hid in language. The initial creative, but as yet indeterminate, act of assent of "The Wreck" is here fully articulated conceptually in the poet's method.

## "...to be still and patient, all I can":[136] the trial of the 'Terrible Sonnets' (1885)

The conscious and creative interchange between mind and nature in poets such as Coleridge and Hopkins is productive of what Coleridge termed "joy". To lose such a consciousness, after having once experienced it, as Coleridge describes in "Dejection: an Ode", is a crisis of spiritual significance in which the very "ground of being" is challenged. As Hopkins grew older his feeling for external nature and his perception of the inscape of Christ in it seem to have lagged. Such losses of feeling and natural inspiration are commonplace

amongst the Romantic poets; it is the subject, for example, of Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood". Hopkins's interest shifted, as he matured, from religious experience of nature to a pastoral concern for humanity, seem in such poems as "The Candle Indoors", "The Handsome Heart", "Felix Randal" and "Harry Ploughman". The absence of feeling for nature and of the inspiration associated with it, does not mean the absence of the higher inspiration which God appears to send through human nature and which seems to have produced the "Terrible Sonnets". It is possible for God to be absent to one part of the mind, yet present to another: Sargent says that Hopkins's cry in these sonnets "is the cry of the absence of and yet the presence of God".

A stanza of Coleridge's "Dejection: an Ode", describing the experience of the loss of the relationship with nature, resembles very closely the feeling of these late sonnets of Hopkins:

"There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence fancy made the dreams of happiness
For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.
But now afflictions bow me down to earth:
Not care I that they rob me of my mirth;

But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man -
This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul".

Here one finds Coleridge, like Hopkins, writing about the loss of his "shaping spirit of imagination". There is, however, a difference between the two. Neither Hopkins nor Wordsworth wrote anything akin to the first line of Coleridge's next stanza: "Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind/Reality's dark dream". Hopkins had other sources of reality to turn to; if he could no longer find Christ inscaped in nature, he could find Him in humanity, as well as in his own self.

The "Terrible Sonnets", however, are about something more than the loss or confirmation of the mystical relationship with nature; they also go beyond the categories in which many critics would place them. The sonnets are about suffering caused primarily through the failure of the sensuous imagination and they are both a public and a private record of the poet's struggle between his elective and affective wills. But this is the surface

reality: the sonnets have been tirelessly examined through logical schemas applied from the outside, rather than treating them as a sequence, an organic whole, and as a microcosm of Hopkins's basic thought and poetic method.

It is vital that one considers the sonnets of 1885 and the slightly later and climactic sonnet of 1888, "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection", as bearing a symbolic relationship to Hopkins's work as a whole, just as "The Wreck" anticipates much of the subsequent poetry. The later sonnet sequence and "The Wreck" express the spiritual journey towards transcendent truth to which Hopkins's entire career, with its successes and suffering, seems to witness. The "Terrible Sonnets" and the "Heraclitean Fire" sonnet, however, reflect more satisfactorily, because more completely, than "The Wreck", the recognition of a tripartite movement - the journey out, the trial and revelation, the journey back - which has an obvious bearing on Hopkins's life.

If the "journey" of "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and the "journey" of the sonnet sequence recount a descent into hell, "une saison en enfer", a voyage into a condition where God himself scarce seems to be, they also recount a return. The whole dualism of "The Wreck" suggests that some kind of redemption or reconciliation is possible; yet the terms of this reconciliation are too obviously and too loudly proclaimed at the conclusion of the poem. The poet's faith, religious and

literary, is mannered, even suspiciously artificial in its starkness. In the later sonnets, however, the poetic technique has matured so that all the seeming fragmentation is brought to wholeness in the metaphors of faith. It is, to use Coleridgean terms, the distinction between Fancy and the Imagination. Fancy, according to Coleridge, is the quality that puts together a work from bits and pieces raided from elsewhere. Imagination, though it uses whatever it can find, fuses the influences into a new creative whole, aesthetically different from the parts that make it up.

Hopkins begins "Carrion Comfort" by refusing to feast on "Despair", and by rejecting the remains of a dead hope; the role of hunter is exchanged for that of hunted: he becomes the victim of the lion-limbed tormentor's "darksome devouring eyes". Even though "these last strands of man" are almost totally bereft of the fire of God's sustaining grace, his selfhood, his humanity, distinguishes him from the vulture he would become by feeding on despair, through his power of choice: "Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be".

The gentle dove of "God's Grandeur" is exchanged for the awful basilisk-like creature of the second quatrain, whose purpose is at first unclear: "why wouldst thou rude on me?". But the reason becomes clear in the sestet: the purposeful and merciful stress of purgation, of trial, is seen as the coherent purpose of God by the poet: "that my chaff might fly; my grain lie sheer and clear."

The grain-chaff metaphor is the surface manifestation of a submerged and highly important metaphor which runs through the sonnet sequence and binds them together. The poet, if he had chosen to be the carrion-eater, would have been eating death, not life, and thus perverting the Sacrament of the Eucharist. As it is, he becomes in submission both part of the food of the eucharist himself ("grain") and a partaker of it ("lapped strength"), participating in the sacrificial transformation of death into life which the Sacraments commemorate and embody. The poet's sufferings are, therefore, allied with Christ's; Hopkins sees himself as personally involved in the eucharist. As J. Hillis Miller points out,[137] the eucharistic metaphor may lend "cheer" special meaning: it could mean to "sustain, or make glad with food and drink", but when taken with the octave imagery, such a word suggests mutual sacrifice. Christ had seemed a predatory beast about to devour the victim-poet, but was in fact making his "victims" fit grain for the eucharist, to be one with himself; on the other hand, the Sacramental Christ gives his body to be spiritual food for man, and the poet, in "feasting" on him, draws strength and joy and undergoes a spiritual transformation, being assimilated into the mystical body of Christ.

The sestet of "Carrion Comfort" records Hopkins's two struggles: one against Despair, which he wins, and the other against "the hero", Christ, which he wins by losing. In "kissing the rod" Hopkins displays an active, even necessary

rebellion, a resistance to merely passive suffering. His presumption, however, in "naming" his opponent in this match, is remarked upon with awe in the horrified whisper "(my God!)". The purpose of the trial is clear: to conquer that sense of pride, one of Hopkins's most serious temptations, and to gain the poet's submission, as a prelude to "rooting out the sin" in the "world within".[138]

The spiritual experience of "No worst, there is none" is almost unbearably physical in its impact, without ever becoming merely physical. We are never removed from the inner world of spiritual torment, despite the senses being brought into play, and the question which the poem is bound to raise is this: what is the nature of the experience Hopkins is describing? The critic Ivor Winters, for example, criticises the poem for being so "particular and personal" that "we can feel no certainty regarding the nature of the experience".[139] But it is precisely the ambiguity and the anguish which the experience gives rise to that Hopkins attempts to capture. He does this by embodying in the grammar and metaphors of the poem the intense, baffling, "no-man-fathomed" nature of the experience: the stark statements, flat in tone, give way to despairing questioning, "Mary, mother of us, where is your relief?" and to exclamations: "O the mind, mind has mountains...". The whole poem is indicative of that "mystery" which is but a part of the "mysterious certainty" of God.

The key, perhaps, to the poet's anguish lies in the term "world-sorrow": "My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief - /woe, world sorrow...". The term has distinct echoes of the "ennui", the processes of frustration, which beset many European Romantic poets. Bump makes this point,[140] and George Steiner in his work In Bluebeard's Castle[141] also considers the importance of what he calls, "febrile lethargy...the drowsy nausea" of Baudelairean "spleen". What Steiner has to say is of significance to our understanding of this sonnet of Hopkins.

Steiner quotes from a poem of Baudelaire's, in which the poet describes an exasperated vague waiting - but for what? - and a gloomy lassitude. Two phrases from Baudelaire's poem "une vague epouvante" ("a vague or indistinct terror") and "humeur farouche" ("fierce temperament") are signals which appear in Hopkins's sonnet sequence: the aura of fear surrounding the unknown in the lines "...the mind, mind has mountains,cliffs of fall/Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed"; the nightmarish, indistinct "beast" of "I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day" and the associated images of darkness and night. Moreover, the currents of frustration and of ironic defeat, the thwarted dreams and desires typical of mid-nineteenth century literature, find their articulation in the novels of the period and in these sonnets in images of brutality and destructiveness: the carrion vulture of "Carrion Comfort"; the intensely real, visceral nature of the pain portrayed in "No worst, there is none" and the

sadistic Fury, a counterpart to the "vieux sphinx" of Baudelaire's poem.

Undoubtedly contained within Hopkins's definition of "world-sorrow" is a mingling of incurable "tristesse", the sin of "tristicia", and a certain narcissism, a cultivation and even enjoyment of "voluptas dolendi".[142] The Biblical allusion is to 2 Corinthians 7:10 - "For the sorrow that is according to God worketh penance, steadfast unto salvation; but the sorrow of the world worketh death". A longing for death, feelings of alienation, the disappearence of God are all emotions which are related to "tristicia", and are feelings which recur throughout Hopkins's life and art and particularly within these sonnets: "...all/Life death does end and each day dies with sleep". But perhaps Hopkins's greatest temptation was a combination of an enjoyment of sorrow and artistic pride, so that language becomes used for self-dedication, self-aggrandizement, rather than for sacramental reconciliation with God.

Hopkins is painfully aware of this tendency in himself and in Romanticism generally: the sources of "world-sorrow" are both universal and particular, as we have seen. Hopkins defines "spiritual sloth" or "desolation" as "darkness and confusion of soul...diffidence without hope and without love, so that it finds itself altogether slothful, tepid, sad, and as it were separated its Creator and Lord".[143] The victim, however, realises his predicament, worries about it, struggles

with it and attempts to overcome it; even in the mystery of suffering, when the certainty of divine aid seems absent, the sonnet sequence in its entirety makes clear that the trial, the purgatorio, is necessary if paradiso is ever to be reached. But a descent into hell, the inferno, is a precursor to the beatific vision.

The sonnet, "I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day" recounts this descent into hell, "une saison en enfer", a voyage into a condition where God himself scarce seems to be. Importantly, the imagery of the eucharist once again underpins the poem, but here the imagery is perverted. Unlike in "Carrion Comfort", Hopkins now feeds on self, - "my taste was me", - a debasement of the elements of the Mass. The body which God sustained in grace in "The Wreck of the Deutschland" has become a sort of perverted chalice, simply a physical construct: "Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse". Gall and not Christ's redemptive blood fills his veins. There is nothing of Christ's body in the "dull dough" of self, nothing of the leaven of the Holy Spirit in the "selfyeast" which cannot rise, but only sours.

One of the most obviously "existential" moments in Hopkins's poetry is closely akin to the moment in Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", where the Mariner, like Hopkins in this poem, is confronted simultaneously by the horror and indifference of existence, and by extension, the divine:

"The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.
We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood began to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersmen's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip -
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip".

The sinister beauty of the word "stride"; the physically repellent but undoubtedly sacramental image of fear sipping from the heart "as at a cup"; the grimness of the steersman's face; the remoteness of the "one bright star" within the Moon's horn (a sailor's omen of bad luck) are all combinations of hope and despair. The Mariner is finally left alone, lost and outcast, buried and isolated under his grief, like Hopkins. Hopkins, however, unlike the Mariner, refuses to forget that while God seems absent now, his finger created His creature, man, and God's time-scheme, however ominous, still governs the world.

In Part IV of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", there occurs that "act of Grace", the crisis of the Mariner's

experience, when the Mariner silently blesses the sea-creatures, an act mysterious and spontaneous, and a reconciliation. Hopkins's own inferno, "this night" of trial, must be seen in the context of some words from a sermon preached in 1879, where that same redemption is described: "...so then this life is dark, a pit, but we work in it; death will shew us daylight, but all our work will then be done."[144] The poet's descent into hell is a typological repetition of Christ's, and in dying with Christ the expectation is that the descent will be transformed, by the process of purgatory, into an ascent into paradise.

If the "journey out" encompasses "The Wreck" and the early nature sonnets, then the trial and revelation of Hopkins's life and art is encapsulated in these later "terrible" sonnets. The nadir and darkest point of that purgatory is to be found in "I wake and feel the fell of dark", whilst in "My own heart let me more have pity on" we see the beginnings of the journey back, which is completed in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire".

In "My own heart let me have pity on", Hopkins continues the lecture to self, but there is a distinct movement from the inner darkness of the preceding sonnets to an inner light, and from a wholly internal world to a sacramental world outside the mind. Hopkins is aware that neither the Coleridgean "joy", nor God its source can be hunted down, grasped or wholly understood: "let joy size/At God knows when to God knows what; whose smile/'s not wrung, see you".

God is the "wringer", not the "wrung" and his action and time scheme alone determine the moment of consolation or desolation. The echoes of Keats's negative capability and the receptive passivity of Coleridge's "to be still and patient, all I can" are contained in Hopkins's lines: "Soul, self; come, poor Jackself, I do advise/You, jaded, let be; call off thoughts awhile/Elsewhere; leave comfort root-room..."; as well as an anticipation of T.S. Eliot's prayer in "Ash Wednesday": "Teach us to sit still/Even among these rocks,/Our peace in His will...".

The sonnet ends with a characteristic fusion of the spiritual and physical, the literal and figurative: God's "smile/'s not wrung, see you; unforeseen times rather - as skies/Betweenpie mountains - lights a lovely mile". We glimpse the world beyond the prison of self in a metaphor, which both dramatises and resolves the dualities in these sonnets. But most importantly, it is through metaphor, and not through the dogmatism of "The Wreck", that belief is asserted. The difficult and painful resolution of faith into belief is apparent in these sonnets: the transition is best expressed in John Coulson's observation that "Faith is in what is alive; belief in what is true - a distinction akin to Kierkegaard's between spontaneity and reflection."[145]

These sonnets attempt to discern "the reserve of truth beyond what the mind reaches and still feels to be behind"[146] and are, in their use of metaphor, indicative of Hopkins's sacramental method at its most refined. The religious vision which informs

that method consistently transforms all the literal world to metaphor, then raises it above metaphor in the conviction of faith: but, this is the substance of the early "nature" sonnets; in these later sonnets Hopkins transforms that conviction into the authentication of belief. So, the light which metaphorically breaks at the end of the poem, offers the light to lighten man's life - "a lovely mile", and the hope of the "daylight" of redemption.

The "Terrible Sonnets", then, represent stylistically an intensification of Hopkins's sacramental method; the style contains a density of word, image, grammatical and metrical nuance which seems to reflect a conscious awareness on the poet's part of how best to express both the "mystery" and the "certainty". If the style signifies the complexity, and the multi-dimensional and multi-referential nature of the "mystery", then the overall schema of the sonnet sequence is a metaphor for the "certainty". The suggestion that some kind of redemption or reconciliation is possible comes from within the poetry, from the internal coherence of the imagery. Hopkins illustrates the Coleridgean distinction between mechanical and organic form quite succintly:

"The form is mechanic when on any given material we impress a pre-determined form, not necessarily arising out of the properties of the material, as when to a mass of wet clay we give whatever shape we wish it to retain when hardened. The organic form, on the other hand, is innate; it shapes as it

develops itself from within, and the fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form."[147]

Early in his life, Hopkins stated an idea which was to become painfully and yet triumphantly true for him:

"...the sordidness of things, which one is compelled perpetually to feel, is perhaps...the most unmixedly painful thing one knows of: and this is (objectively) intensified, and (subjectively) destroyed by Catholicism."[148]

Many of Hopkins's poems demonstrate the power of the Catholic faith to "destroy" the sordidness of man and the world, in particular, "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection" (1888).

This poem represents the terminus of the Romantic quest for vital permanence, for a way of understanding the intersection of the actual and the ideal, Hopkins's personal search in the majority of poems. The "world-sorrow" of the "terrible" sonnets has been conquered in the triumph which the poem celebrates: "Enough! the Resurrection/A heart's clarion! Away grief's gasping, joyless days, dejection." Here the sacramental method reaches to encompass the subject in the numerous allusive metaphors of the poem and the complex of references, as the poet attempts to illustrate the phenomena before him. The vitality and value of the mortal world is

captured in the opening lines:

> **"Cloud-puffball, torn tufts, tossed pillows**
> **flaunt forth, then chevy on an air -**
> **built thoroughfare: heaven-roysterers, in gay-**
> **gangs they**
> **throng; they glitter in marches."**

We are reminded of the exuberant "nature" poems of 1877 in the poet's celebration of the protean qualities of the natural world and, in many ways, "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" serves as a logical conclusion to the poems of that period: here, as in the earlier poems, Hopkins attempts to render the very being or inscape of an object in language of sacramental significance, which releases a multiple of meaning "in an instant of time". Hopkins constantly strives for the "prepossessional" qualities of language: such compound words in line four as "shrivelights", in which a web of meanings is caught, are merely part of a deliberately complex metaphor of Newmanesque contuition:

> **"... wherever an elm arches,**
> **Shivelights and shadowtackle in long lashes lace,**
> **lance and pair."**

The synoptic nature of the metaphor demands of the reader an awareness of the etymological roots of its component words and its dense syntactical relationship. Here, Hopkins exemplifies poetically what the Notes of

1868 describe theoretically: we confront a series of often discordant particularities and must make an immediate reference between them to elucidate a sense of the whole and a new prepossession belonging to the whole. Such simultaneity of apprehension is the prime characteristic of diatonic art, according to Hopkins, and one of the hallmarks of his sacramental method. More satisfyingly than the earlier nature poems, this poem fuses thinking and feeling in a irreducible configuration of particulars seized as epiphany and oneness: the sacramental associations are clear.

The conclusion of the poem, that is lines 16-24, contains the "comfort" of the title: all nature is, to those who see rightly, an epiphany of the presence of the sacramental Christ. This is the principle which transforms the barbarous "brute beauty" of the opening of the poem to the sacramental sign of the "diamond" of the conclusion. The octave stands in the same sort of relationship to the sestet as the pre-consecrated host does to the consecrated: the visual facts of "nature's bonfire" are transformed into the spiritual insights of the poet's "I am all at once what Christ is...". The poet's denial of full sacramental union at the conclusion of "Hurrahing in Harvest" -

> "The heart rears wings bold and bolder
> And hurls for him, O <u>half</u> hurls earth for him off
> under his feet."

- is here transformed into a vision which acknowledges fully the difficult resolution of the feeling, creative act of assent with its articulation conceptually. The final image of the poem summarises the value of Hopkins's life, faith and poetic career by uniting the paradoxical co-existing contrarieties of Christ as man and God with man as time-bound physical animal and time-less spiritual being:

> **"I am all at once what Christ is, since he was what I am, and**
> **this Jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch, matchwood,**
> **immortal diamond**
> **Is immortal diamond."**

The use of language is obviously metaphorical, but the difficulty resides in explaining the effects of such a use, since the metaphors - "joke, poor potsherd, patch..." - are on the surface contradictory of each other. The imagination is thus forced to compare like with unlike and by the process which Newman identifies as "saying and unsaying" we come to a "positive result": we recognise that the individual metaphor is given significance by the poet's work as a whole, in the same way that the individual life is given meaning by sharing in the mystical body of Christ. Thus the "enormous dark" which threatens to drown nature's "clearest-selved spark, Man", carries echoes of the "frightful ... nightfall" in which the "Dame, at our door/Drowned" is lost, and the night which "whelms, whelms, and will end

us" is but another facet of the threat to personal creativity and vitality which "dark heaven's baffling ban/Bars or hell's spell thwarts". But man's soul, like "the ooze of oil/Crushed", and like the diamond, is paradoxically a product of that "enormous dark": it is formed, tested and tempered by the pressure of God's finger and is ultimately impervious to the "vastness" which "blurs and time beats level". No other poem states with such paradoxical certainty the poet's hope of resurrection: it is to be found in the images and in the structure of the poem which moves from light to darkness and back to the "eternal beam" of the sestet; it is even to be found in the typography of the poem, where the conclusion of the clause, "This Jack, joke, poor potsherd..." is to be found starkly separated from its subject and yet connected through the repetition of the phrase "immortal diamond", as if at the moment of Resurrection the base metal of the physical body is mysteriously transubstantiated into the jewel which becomes man's total actuality. The symbol of the diamond is the culmination of a structured convergence of the probabilities necessary for real assent and as we begin, in Coulson's words, "that intolerable wrestle with meaning, that sense not so much of dialectical pressure, as more properly of 'crucifixion'"[149], we come to know what constitutes literary and religious integrity.

## Conclusion

Hopkins's struggle to achieve some sort of integrity between a Catholic tradition of Sacraments and a Romantic tradition of sacramentalism is the record of the development of a poetic method. Hopkins found sufficient justification within the scholastic philosophical tradition of his church for using the idea of inscape to give the romantic self an inward but direct and validly real knowledge of spiritual reality in nature, a knowledge that is sensory and pre-conceptual in its beginnings, producing inarticulate emotion, but is perfectly compatible with the abstract knowledge into which the mind assimilates it. The Romantic contribution to Hopkins's unification of sensibility is to be found in Coleridge. Religious life requires in Coleridge's view a unified sensibility. He writes that "from the very nature of those principles taught in the Bible, they are understood in exact proportion as they are believed and felt". He continues:

"The regulator is never separated from the main-spring. For the words of the Apostle are literally and philosophically true: we (that is the human race) live by faith. Whatever we do or know that in kind is different from the brute creation, has its origin in a determination of the reason to have faith and trust in itself... . It is itself, therefore, the realizing principle, the spiritual substratium of the whole complex body of truths. This primal act of faith is enunciated in the word God: a faith not derived from, but itself the ground and source

of, experience, and without which the fleeting chaos of facts would no more form experience, than the dust of the grave can of itself make a living man. The imperative and oracular form of the inspired Scripture is the form of reason itself in all things purely rational and moral".

This is perhaps Coleridge's contribution to Hopkins's unification of the religious and secular: and a reason for Hopkins's use of Biblical imagery in his poetry. Coleridge elaborates: the "Sacred Book" presents "to us the stream of time continuous as life and a symbol of eternity, inasmuch as the poet and future are contained in the present... . In the scriptures both facts and persons must of necessity have a twofold significance, a past and a future, a temporary and perpetual, a particular and a universal application."[150] The total reconciling power of God's imagination emerges in the Incarnate Word and Hopkins's poetry attempts to communicate this Word inscaped in human and external nature.

The poet's word, language, reaches towards expression of that "truth", but does not necessarily contain it and certainly does not determine it. Hopkins's poetic method is related to his particular faith in the "no-man-fathomed" mystery of God, which although not limited by language, can be sacramentally expressed by it. Hopkins's "authentic cadence" demands of the reader what he felt God demanded of him, an ability to read the mysterious and manifold eloquence of the world, which is "news, Word of God" and to penetrate

its metaphors and paradoxes, to see that the literal is the figurative, and that the figurative is ultimately the literal and true. The distinct reality of the world is never celebrated for its mere actuality by Hopkins; the underlying, ultimately mysterious spirituality is ever present. The diction, syntax, imagery and structure of the poetry incarnate the "mysterious certainty" of God, without ever limiting the inscrutable, yet intensely distinct, mystery, which forms the constant of his faith.

The sacramental "trysting-place" with Christ, "the heart of the host", is perhaps the heart of the "enormous conjunction" of physical and metaphysical, secular and sacred. For it is here in the natural, and yet man-made, Sacramental symbols of bread and wine, and in the inexhaustible artistic potentiality of those symbols, that Aquinas and Coleridge meet for Hopkins. The Sacrament is the source of the unity and corporate life of the Church and a reconcilation of the Coleridgean unity-within-tension which is necessary for growth. But for Hopkins it is more: the Sacraments represent the ultimate sign of the Cross in its double aspect, atonement for sin and worship of God. The full sacrificial action in which something is offered to God, in adoration, thanksgiving, petition and propitiation, and is accepted by Him, is inextricably bound up with and symbolic of the pattern or inscape of Hopkins's life and art. The eucharistic paradigm stands behind the poetry from the words of adoration in "The Wreck" and the nature sonnets: "Be adored among men, God, three-numbered form", the

thanksgiving of "Pied Beauty": "Glory be to God for dappled things"; the petition of "The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air we Breathe" and the anguished cry of "Mary, mother of us, where is your relief?" to the propitiatory words of "Patience, hard thing!" and "My own heart let me more have pity on". It is entirely appropriate that Hopkins's climactic poem "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" should conclude triumphantly with the "comfort of the Resurrection", with its echo of the ancient hymn, "Vexilla Regis":

"The Cross shines forth in mystic glow
Where he in flesh, our flesh who made,
Our sentence bore, our ransom paid".

In that same hymn - and in Hopkins's poem - we find the counter-balance to the bleak vision of "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves", and perhaps most importantly, the prefigurement of much of David Jones's most characteristic imagery:

"Fulfilled is all that David told
In true prophetic song of old;
Amidst the nations, God, saith he,
Hath reigned and triumphed from the tree."

## FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

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# CHAPTER 3

## "The Dwelling Place":

## David Jones and the Sacramental Tradition

"A man's religion is the form of mental rest, or dwelling-place, which, partly, his fathers have gained or built for him, and partly, by due reverence to former custom, he has built for himself; consisting of whatever imperfect knowledge may have been granted, up to that time, in the land of his birth, of the Divine character, presence and dealings; modified by the circumstances of surrounding life."

John Ruskin Val d'Arno

"And my original country is the region of the summer stars"

Taliesin

In a characteristically forthright manner, David Jones wrote to Harmon Grisewood in 1962 on the subject of literary influence: "...in my view the whole business of critics nosing around for 'influences' is a bore and virtually useless and deceptive, and gives quite a false impression of how an artist works...it's more the whole conditioning civilisational situation into which one was born that determines the "form"... it's absurd to try to trace the differing and disparate strands... ."[1] For Jones the fatuity of the exercise is obvious, but this does not prevent him from stating clearly both in this letter and elsewhere what those "differing and disparate strands" of influence are. I propose to deal with "the whole conditioning civilisational situation" later, since it seems to me a vital way of comprehending the portrait of the artist and his works, but for the moment I want to consider the nature of literary influence upon Jones and the influence of one poet in particular, Gerard Manley Hopkins. By so doing, I want to substantiate my claims for Jones and Hopkins as fellow poets in what I have earlier termed "the sacramental tradition", and I hope to demonstrate why I have yoked together two poets of two very different historical periods, a Victorian and a modern, as the best examples of that tradition.

David Jones first encountered the works of Gerard Manley Hopkins in 1926 or 1927, and in 1930 he acquired from his father his first copy of Gerard Manley Hopkins's poems for Christmas. Throughout the remainder of his life,

David Jones reserved his warmest admiration for two poets, James Joyce and Hopkins. He declared in a letter written in 1949 that the latter is

**"more interesting to me than almost any poet for centuries... . He really understood what poetry is all about and how it is a made thing with a shape - he really 'makes' his poems in a way that can be said of few poets".**

And, he adds, "He had a very great influence on me - however unworthily and feebly employed in my stuff".[2] The degree to which David Jones assimilated Gerard Manley Hopkins's influence is anything but feeble or unworthy, since David Jones has become a modern poet of major importance and, with Gerard Manley Hopkins, the foremost exponent of sacramental poetry in English literature. But influence does not mean, at least for Jones, slavish imitation or mere plagiarism: he has developed a style which is entirely sui generis, and yet the underlying structure or what we have termed "grammar" is built upon a literary and religious inheritance in which Gerard Manley Hopkins looms large.

It is as well to clear away initially those obvious similarities and differences between the two poets, before proceeding to the more profound and subtle links. Several critics have performed the former task, but seem unwilling to go further in their assessments of these two writers.[3] Like Gerard Manley Hopkins, David Jones was a Catholic convert,

having been received into the Catholic Church in 1921, although he remarks that he was "'inside' a Catholic since 1917"; what separates the work of another writer of Catholic background, Joyce, from Gerard Manley Hopkins and David Jones is that they do not see their religion as merely a residue of cultural symbolism devoid of metaphysical significance. For them, their faith is a medium of feeling and perception, possibly sharpened by the emotional turmoil both suffered and the subsequent search for spiritual value which gives urgency and intensity to their poetry. Like Gerard Manley Hopkins, David Jones possesses an acute visual imagination. Hopkins was a perceptive draftsman; David Jones was one of England's foremost graphic artists and painters.

The influence of Gerard Manley Hopkins on David Jones is impossible to isolate: David Jones's reading when he first encountered Gerard Manley Hopkins was very wide, encompassing amongst other works T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" and by the time he was writing his first long poem, David Jones was much influenced by Joyce's "Anna Livia Plurabelle" and T.S. Eliot's translation of Perse's "Anabase". Furthermore Jones's poetry is very different from that of Hopkins in several respects: David Jones does not use conventional verse form, often not writing in verse at all. And while Gerard Manley Hopkins tends to focus on physical or natural beauty and the complex subjective feelings it arouses, Jones employs "the modernist techniques of allusion and juxtaposition to test traditional cultural values against the experiences of

modern war, technological civilisation, and political totalitarianism".[4] And although Jones is never as subjectively personal or as "confessional" as Hopkins sometimes is, I hope to demonstrate how the former builds upon the relationship, sacramentally understood, which Gerard Manley Hopkins creates between poet and audience, between the person who "makes" and the listener who must respond, to realise a poetry which is "hidden" and obliquely subjective.

One area in which the influence of Hopkins on David Jones is most strongly felt is language: in a letter written in 1962 Jones remarks upon "the creative explosion of Gerard Manley Hopkins's work" and its revelatory impact, which is, considering the milieu of "late Victorian England and the general mood of the Society of Jesus in that epoch... a bloody miracle."[5] Further, David Jones remarks that Hopkins "did invigorate the English language...it was an astonishing achievement. The implications of which are still barely understood - perhaps less understood now than 20 years ago".[6] Hopkins's debt to Middle Welsh and later Welsh poetry was understood perfectly by David Jones, who had read the poetry in Welsh, a language he had begun to teach himself in 1910 at the age of sixteen. Jones later remarked: "If you want to know what old Welsh poetry is like, don't read translations, read Hopkins."[7]

The respect which is accorded to Gerard Manley Hopkins can be instanced by the frequent references to him in David Jones's

essays: these are collected in Epoch and Artist and The Dying Gaul, the indices of which indicate fifteen references to Hopkins. The poetry, even more significantly, alludes to the works of Hopkins in several places: the titles of Parts III and V of In Parenthesis derive from "The Bugler's First Communion" and "Tom's Garland", and David Jones quotes from the former when an infantryman's act of kindness in the trenches elicits from the narrator the words, "Good night kind comrade".[8] It is no coincidence that among the soldiers in Jones's poem, some of whom are named after poets, is "Taffy Hopkins".[9] In "The Tutelar of the Place", Jones alludes to "Pied Beauty" when the poet prays to the goddess he believes in as,

**"patroness of things counter, parti, pied, several**
**protectress of things known and handled help of things**
**familiar and small...".**[10]

Jones's poem evokes Gerard Manley Hopkins as an example of the kind of poet who preserves and celebrates in his work the religious values which are threatened by the world of facts and pragmatism.

The rich texture of David Jones's language also reflects the influence of Hopkins. Jones's own definition of poetry as "language at a heightened tension" with "a sense of form and shape, and exact and evocative use of each word"[11] owes much to Hopkins and beyond him, to Coleridge. Similarly, Hopkins

unquestionably influences the local or immediate form of Jones's poems - the shape made by a phrase, a clause, a series of lines and more especially Jones's use of ellipses, his asyntactical formations, his use of unorthodox compounds and his occasional neologisms.[12] Together with the English metaphysical poets and T.S. Eliot, Gerard Manley Hopkins provided David Jones with examples of how, and to what effect, incongruous images may be combined. The heterogeneous associationism evident throughout the imagery of Jones's work effects the same result as in Hopkins's poetry: very often our perception of religious metaphors, often cliched, are revivified through the occasionally hazardous yoking together of dissimilar images. In The Anathemata, for example, Christ is symbolised at one point by a hard-drinking lecherous sea-captain and, elsewhere, by a moving glacier. Paradox, as we have seen, is one of the hallmarks of the sacramental tradition.

Finally, Jones places Gerard Manley Hopkins within an aesthetic tradition to which he himself belongs. It is a tradition of affinity which is Celtic: Jones remarks that what Hopkins "saw in Welsh metrical forms...'chime' in his mind with the exacting discipline which...was a pronounced element of his own psychology". In Gerard Manley Hopkins's poetry, David Jones detects "this Celtic thing of demanding intricate and complex forms of compactness and precision" that he sees as constituting a tradition extending from the visual art of La Tene and Kells, through to Hopkins and

Dylan Thomas. Also included in this tradition of affinity are Taliesin, the author of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and Lewis Carroll. What sets them all apart, Jones writes in 1935, is a special quality of the imagination, which belongs pre-eminently to Hopkins:

> **"...it has to do with a certain affection for the intimate creatureliness of things - a care for, and appreciation of, the particular genius of places, men, trees, animals, and yet withal a pervading sense of metamorphosis and mutability. That trees are men walking. That words 'bind and loose material things."**[13]

This important statement of David Jones takes us to the heart of things: I have said earlier that Gerard Manley Hopkins and David Jones have several superficial similarities and that it is possible to trace the 'outward' influence of Hopkins on Jones by instancing localised borrowings of phrases or intonations in the latter's works, but more importantly for our purposes David Jones here shows himself to be very firmly in what I have termed the sacramental tradition. He declares himself to be self-consciously part of a literary tradition which includes "the author of 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner'" and Hopkins, and by so doing, places himself in an order of sign-makers, to adapt one of his own phrases. The real significance, however, lies not only in what he says above, but in the way that he says it.

Jones first claims for the imagination a special role: it acts as a mediator between the "real" world, allowing the observer knowledge of "the particular genius of places" and the ideal, that "other" state of being, into which the real is constantly being metamorphosed. That the action of the imagination is dynamic and creative, because it effects this metamorphosis, is esentially a Coleridgean claim; beyond this, the idea that the awareness of metaphysical reality is dependent upon our sensuous apprehension of physical reality is of course Thomist. The polarity of Jones's thought, establishing notions of Real and Ideal, is at once a hallmark of Coleridgean philosophy and a partial indicator of a way of seeing which is sacramental. Robert Langbaum has remarked that Romanticism is "both idealistic and realistic in that it conceives of the ideal as existing only in conjunction with the real and the real as existing only in conjunction with the ideal. The two are brought into conjunction only in the act of perception when the higher or imaginative rationality brings the ideal to the real by penetrating and possessing the external world...".[14] The imagination for David Jones as for Coleridge and Hopkins, then, is an adunating power, reconciliatory in its action, discerning within apparently discordant or mutable elements "the consubstantiality of all being".

Jones's emphasis on the mutability of being echoes a theme common in Gerard Manley Hopkins's poetry, in, for example, "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire...", in which fragmentariness and disorder are given shape and meaning by

man's relationship with God. Hopkins chooses to address himself to this problem of what one critic has termed "diasparaction"[15] through symbolism. The word "symbol" implies a putting together of something torn apart, and yet the symbol is always a fragment, incomplete in itself, a "living part of the whole it enunciates" according to Coleridge. It is no surprise, therefore, to find David Jones moving from a literal statement to a symbolic one: "that trees are men walking". But what is noteworthy is the balance of the metaphor: men are not compared to trees, rather the other way around. For David Jones, as for Hopkins and Coleridge, human life and meaning derive from within:

**"that which we find in ourselves is...the substance and the life of all our knowledge. Without this latent presence of the "I AM", all modes of existence in the external world would flit before us as coloured shadows".**[16]

To his philosophical collaborator, J.H. Green, Coleridge remarked in 1829: "We behold our own light reflected from the object as light bestowed by it."

We have seen that the use of sacramental symbol by Coleridge and Gerard Manley Hopkins is an attempt to grasp the truth of a metaphysical reality which is, by very definition, "past all grasp". The urge to wholeness and reconciliation is realised philosophically in Coleridge's principle of polarity, but both Coleridge and Hopkins and indeed, much

later, David Jones, realise that actual experience is one of fragmentation and splitting apart, that we can never "know" one of the poles. But the sacramental symbol seeks to bridge that gulf which separates experienced reality and true being. True sacramental symbol testifies to an ontological duality of being, a holding in tension, where the poet constantly seeks fulfilment in the whole: "the utmost is only an approximation to that absolute Union, which the soul sensible of its imperfections in itself, of its Halfness, yearns after".[17] Hence we find in David Jones's work continual evidence of metamorphosis, where every flower, bird and beast is at once itself and significant of the sacred: his desire is always to transubstantiate and "make over", to reach towards that ultimate beauty.

"That trees are men walking" is of course a myth, and the mythopoeic impulse is an integral part of the sacramental tradition. The clause is a myth because the conception is fictive, it cannot literally be true. But we find the metaphor amidst a series of observations which are factual. Thus, in the very fabric of Jones's writing we discover the fragmented clause amidst the complete sentences, the poetic metaphor in prosaic argument and the fictional symbol amongst the factual statements. David Jones's habit of perception is dualistic, discerning the world of myth and its contrary, what he termed, the world of formulae, but it is not necessarily "confrontational" as one critic has suggested.[18] The superficial evidence of the prose writings would indicate a growing

preoccupation with the inimical world of formulae, but I would suggest that close examination of the poetic writings, particularly In Parenthesis and The Anathemata shows David Jones's habit of thinking to be more correctly "paratactic", a holding in tension of the worlds of idea and fact, characteristic of sacramentalism, rather than starkly confrontational. If we subscribe to the latter view which seems a rather unsubtle reading of the principal poetic texts, then we overlook what is inherent in the very structure of the poetry. Moreover, the mythopoeic tradition in which David Jones consciously places himself, along with Coleridge and Gerard Manley Hopkins, deals with fictions: as Frank Kermode points out "fictions are for finding things out, and they change as the needs of sense-making change".[19] And the mode of finding out is the sacramental symbol which allows the poet to search more deeply: "the symbolist leaves the given to find that which is more real."[20] But the given and the more real, the fact and the fiction, must be apprehended by the artist as co-terminous rather than as antagonistic. Hence David Jones:

> **"It is significant that the Roman Catholic Church uses the same Preface for the Mass of Corpus Christi as the one she uses during the Christmas season. In it we are reminded that by the love of a thing seen we may be drawn to love what is unseen".[21]**

Jones finally remarks "that words 'bind and loose material things'". I intend to explore more fully the complex associations and meanings which accrue around David Jones's view of language, but for the moment we realise that like Gerard Manley Hopkins before him, David Jones subscribes to that Coleridgean trust in language as the embodiment of the experiences of a community. "For him", writes Coulson of Coleridge, "the primary response to language is not analytic, but fiduciary. In religion, as in poetry, we are required to make a complex act of inference and assent, and we begin by taking on trust expressions which are usually in analogical, metaphorical or symbolic form, and by acting out the claims they make: understanding religious language is a function of understanding poetic language."[22] For Coleridge, as for Hopkins and Jones, poetry - as symbolic utterance - is not deceptive, it is rather the most full and exacting possible use of language. A work of art is "rich in proportion to the variety of parts which it holds in unity".[23] The most successful poem or symbol is that which successfully holds in balance the widest reach of reality. Such a symbol is the work of "the poet, described in ideal perfection".[24] Thus it is that religious ideas are expressed in symbolic language: what we have, as in poetry, is "a use of language in which words do not stand for terms possessing a constant meaning but are to be seen as components in a field of force that take their value from the charge of the field as a whole".[25] In Shakespearean tragedies, we do not really

know what any part of the play means until the expression of the whole play has been completed.[26] Symbolic language can, in this way, fail: it fails in precision. But it is also a triumph of language, for "the diverse and apparently contradictory aspects of a complete experience are being held in the unity which is its essential character, and in terms of which it can alone be adequately communicated to us".[27] It is in this sense that such language is "fiduciary": the symbol requires us to trust that it is truly part of a whole experience of reality larger than itself, and it is also in this sense that David Jones's words can "bind or loose material things". With such an act of trust, the sacramental character of symbol can act. Symbolic utterance, whether in word, or manual acts or images, can "find" us in a Coleridgean sense, evoking a response of our being, and leading us to a deeper perception of the reality within and without ourselves.

So, then, we discern beneath the obvious affinities between Hopkins and Jones a more complex relationship which has as its common denominator a view of existence as sacramentally realised. That sacramental sense issues in the poetry in various forms, and three fundamental questions must be posed at this stage before we can turn to detailed criticism of the poetry. The first is: what are the origins of this sacramental sense in David Jones? And the second is: in what way does David Jones differ from Gerard Manley Hopkins in his use of sacramentalism; and third, how does David Jones's "individual talent" recreate the tradition inherited by him,

since tradition is also about innovation. To answer the first question, we must return to the opening remarks of this chapter and to David Jones's words: what "makes" the artist is not so much localised literary influence as "the whole conditioning civilisational situation", and it is that "situation" that I now want to consider.

## Dislocation and "The Decline of the West"

Frank Kermode has indicated in his work The Sense of an Ending that what distinguishes the cultural movement of modernism is its eschatalogical anxiety and endemic sense of crisis. Many of the poets of the same literary generation as David Jones, Eliot and Pound particularly, see the present as a decline from a finer age and wherever one locates the point of decline, the sense of history which informs the work of these writers is essentially apocalyptic, instinct with terror.[28] What one critic has termed "the shrill Germanic desperation" of Spengler's The Decline of the West furnishes David Jones with "a kind of satisfaction at the grimness of our destiny",[29] but his synthesising nature creates a more personal response to this cultural anxiety by utlilising a complex of ideas found in traditional Roman Catholic doctrine. Spengler's ideas, however distasteful their amoral pessimism, did form for David Jones a locus for his own discontent and formed for many of David Jones's contemporaries a complex of ideas and attitudes that seemed to locate modern European civilisation

in what Spengler throughout The Decline of the West refers to as the "morphology of world-culture". Modern Europe had brought technology to such a pitch of advancement that human value seemed lost and impossible to sustain. F.R. Leavis believed, in For Continuity, that Spengler had understood the basic problem of industrialism. "One can", Leavis said, "without endorsing the Spenglerian idiom or philosophy, recognise its felicity...as an account of the present situation. The traditional ways of life have been destroyed by the machine, more and more does human life depart from the natural rhythms, the cultures have mingled, and the forms have dissolved into chaos, so that everywhere the serious literature of the West betrays a sense of paralysing consciousness, of a lack of direction, of momentum, of dynamic axioms".[30] The closeness of Leavis's and David Jones's thought is apparent.

Jones's debt to Spengler is theoretical: David Jones writes in "The Myth of Arthur" that Spengler "had a very special insight into the cyclic character of the periods of decline, and certainly the trend, so far as we can see, of the contemporary world, verifies a number of his conclusions."[31] Spengler's presumption that we are living on "the metaphysically-exhausted soil of the West" is accepted by David Jones throughout his work, and receives its fullest expression in The Anathemata at the end of the "Angle-Land", where the Second World War is set "toward the last phase/of our dear West". Spengler's concept of "epoch" in which

events in the course of a culture mark "a necessary and fateful turning point", is implicit in Jones's use of the term and is regarded as being important enough as a definition of his own time to provide the title for David Jones's first collection of essays, Epoch and Artist. Similarly, David Jones takes from Spengler the idea of a culture as akin to a person, going through its youth, middle age and old age before decaying into a civilisation, naming the European Middles Ages as "the young-time"[32] and describing the modern period as a "cultural December".[33]

So, as David Jones speculates on the dehumanisation of present culture he finds in Spengler's theories a sympathetic realisation and explanation of Western society's disease. But David Jones by no means assents to Spenglerian pessimism; rather he uses all his intellectual and imaginative energies to create, out of his own life and art, a radical challenge to that bleakness. What one critic has termed his "exemplary refusal"[34] stimulates David Jones to a passionate reworking of the sacramental tradition in order as Seamus Heaney has claimed, to create "a British counter-culture"[35] to stand against Spengler's dystopian vision.

In the preface to The Anathemata David Jones's term for his sense of cultural and historical dislocation, which carries for him the same force as the phrase "dissociation of sensibility" did for Eliot, is "the Break"; Colin Wilcockson has demonstrated that this is a reminiscence of William Morris's

image in his essay, "The Beauty of Life", of "a break in the continuity of the golden chain" which binds us to our past.[36] The term "the Break" implies more than dislocation: it implies fragmentation, incompleteness and ruin, the severing of links in that chain, accompanied by a desire for wholeness again and the reforging of those fractured links. But this concept of a break in tradition brought about by the dominance of "technics" over "lyrics", or as David Jones would have it, of "doing" rather than "making", is not new.[37] Schiller in 1795, anticipating Jones, wrote that,

"As soon as enlarged experience and more precise speculation made necessary a sharper division of the sciences on one hand, and on the other, the more intricate machinery of states made necessary a more rigorous dissociation of ranks and occupations, the essential bond of human nature was torn apart...this disorder, which art and learning began in the inner man, was rendered complete and universal by the new spirit of government... . The simple organisation of the first republics...now gave place to an ingenious piece of machinery, in which out of the patching together of a vast number of lifeless parts a collective mechanical life results. State and Church, law and customs, were now torn apart; enjoyment was separated from labour, means from ends, effort from reward. Eternally chained to only one single little fragment of the whole, man himself grew to be only a fragment."[38]

The fragmentation and ruin that Schiller saw as the index of the social and economic reality of the time, were also observed by Hegel from a philosophical standpoint:

**"...our epoch is a birth-time, and a period of transition. The spirit of man has broken with the order of things...the spirit of the time, growing slowly and quietly ripe for the new form it is to assume, disintegrates one fragment after another of the structure of its previous world".**

The words could have come from David Jones's pen and may remind us that Jones's heightened sense of fragmentation and ruin, although given form by Spengler's writings and topicality by the events of 1914-18, is an aesthetic response, inherited from his Romantic and Victorian poetic predecessors, most obviously Coleridge and Hopkins, to a world inimical to sacramental art. Coleridge and his successors as we have seen were only too aware of the artistically debilitating rift between the literal and metaphorical worlds, between fact and idea, where means and ends become separated and "man himself grew to be only a fragment".

Fragmentation and incompleteness haunt Jones as writer and artist and are central to any understanding of his contribution to the sacramental tradition. The Great War is often taken by many critics to be the focus of Jones's awareness of dislocation, but we find in the life as a whole the phenomenonology of fragmentation: the early death of a

younger brother, the very real spiritual distress which leads to two nervous breakdowns, two world wars, poetry and painting left incomplete, unfulfilled personal relationships. What Coleridge remarked of his own unsatisfactory life can be applied equally to Jones: "I have beheld the whole of all, wherein/My Heart had any interest in this life,/To be disrent and torn from off my Hopes". The whole of Jones's cultural orientation was incomplete: the pursuit of a Celtic visionary gleam that had fled. Jones was widely read in Welsh history, but the Wales he loved ended with the death of Llewelyn ap Gruffyd on 11 December 1282 and reached back into a Wales of myth and not of fact. Jones's feeling of an unsatisfied longing, a homelessness which yearned for roots in his father's native Wales, lies at the heart of his preoccupation with "roots". But this sense of longing - which is an inner form of the perception of reality as incomplete - also saturates the work of Jones's nineteenth century literary predecessors. Shelley's Alastor leaves "his alienated home/ To seek strange truths in undiscovered lands". The questing voyages of the fictional Childe Harold parallel the questing voyages of the actual Lord Byron. "The Ancient Mariner" concerns a doomed and restless wanderer, and is a poem that is a constant focus of Jones's attention.[39] It is little coincidence, I think, that David Jones's <u>The Anathemata</u> and <u>In Parenthesis</u> both contain voyages which are "rites

de passages" and which involve a transition or metamorphosis from one reality to another, a type of "going home". In David Jones's poetry, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" is alluded to in the opening part of In Parenthesis, "The Many Men So Beautiful" and was, David Jones tells us, "much in my mind during the writing of Part 3".[40] There are several allusions to "The Rime" in the text of The Anathemata and in a note left in one of David Jones's own copies of the poem, he observes of the "Keel, Ram and Stauros" section that, "'The Ancient Mariner' is behind a number of forms used in this section, and elsewhere in 'Anathemata'. The Ancient Mariner is one of the clues to 'Anathemata'?". The corollary to this sense of longing is the feeling that life in the here-and-now is torn and broken and there follows a prevailing sense of incompleteness, fragmentation and ruin. The impulse towards wholeness and towards a unifying factor amongst these ruins, although not yet apparent, will mark the beginning of David Jones's sacramental awareness.

Early death is not merely early demise - it is the ruin or breaking up of a life which is not yet properly formed. In the Great War and in his artistic recalling of his experiences in that War, David Jones faces the fragmented life and the torn humantiy of such as Aneirin Lewis "spilled there" and "the little Jew". It is in this chaotic landscape where even the dead are "churned and shockt from rest all out-harrowed and higgeldy-piggeldy" that Jones begins to seek meaning amidst the debris. "For such breakings away and

dissolving of comradeship and token of division are causes of great anguish when men sense how they stand so perilous and transitory in this world".[41] It is, however, not simply the transitoriness of other men's lives but also the fragility of his own which David Jones confronts here. The images which pervade In Parenthesis and which begin The Anathemata are those of ruins, fractured remnants of humanity or of buildings, in the first instance metaphorical temples of the spirit, in the second literal ecclesiastical ruins. The latter are used by David Jones as objective correlatives inseparable from the sundered humanity they deliberately recall to image psychic inner ruin or material outer ruin;[42] either way, David Jones re-enacts Shelley's vision, in which the "wandering step" leads to "the awful ruins of the days of old", where "among the ruined temples...poring on memorials/of the world's youth," there flashes "meaning" on the wanderer's mind. "What mouldering Temples we seem to be!" exclaimed Coleridge, (and T.S. Eliot observed that "The author of Biographia Literaria was already a ruined man"). The "meaning" that David Jones seeks in these "mouldering Temples" is to be partially realised in In Parenthesis, as I shall demonstrate,[43] but like Hopkins before him, David Jones felt himself to be the inhabitant of a world torn and rent apart from its wholeness, and therefore to make any sense of this fragmentation, meaning had to be sought within and without. In Parenthesis, it seems to me, seeks for meaning from without the artist in the same way that Hopkins in "The Wreck of the Deutschland" imposes his Catholic schema so artificially

from outside. I sense neither in "The Wreck" nor in In Parenthesis that the "authentic cadence" has yet been discovered by the respective authors; only in the later poetry of Hopkins, most obviously in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire..." and in David Jones's The Anathemata, do we see the inner imperatives fulfilled.

Dislocation and fragmentation, then, define David Jones's psychological and aesthetic being for much of his life, but most noticeably in the early years, and whilst the Great War heightened this dis-ease, it is vital to place his response in a much wider context, one which originates in the early nineteenth century and continues through to the twentieth century: the Coleridgean dichotomy between fact and value and the essential problem of Romantic sacramental thought, the vindication of the imagination in a world grown abstract and material.

In another emphasis, that is by moving from subject matter to form, we find that fragmentation characterises much of the structure of David Jones's writing. It has been argued that, once again, the war is at the root of this with its splintering perspectives demanding an equivalently fractured style; or that like T.S. Eliot in "The Waste Land" modern poetry must somehow reflect the incohesiveness of modern civilisation, and to an extent I would subscribe to both these views. But these views are confining; they do not allow for what seems to me the much more significant

"conditioning" role of Romantic poetry, and in particular the influence of Coleridge. I have in mind not only the fragmentary poem, in the sense of the unfinished poem, such as "Christabel" or "The Fall of Hyperion", but also poems such as "The Excursion" that were open forms and could be added to indefinitely (of "The Excursion" Hazlitt suggested that "this very original and powerful performance" was "like one of those stupendous but half-finished structures, which have been suffered to mould into decay, because the cost and labour attending them exceeded their use or beauty"). It is no surprise to find amongst David Jones's "oeuvre" incomplete drafts and fragments, such as The Kensington Mass of 1973, as well as more significantly the recently published The Roman Quarry (1981). The editors of the latter concede that "so fastidious a writer (as David Jones) would not have published these pieces unrevised", so the book can in no sense be said to constitute a "text". However, The Roman Quarry is of great exegetical importance in that it proves for the first time that everything David Jones wrote, after In Parenthesis was published in 1937, was conceived as a single large-scale, epic poem which, like Wordsworth and "The Excursion", he was never able to complete. Not only the pieces in The Sleeping Lord, but also The Anathemata, were quarried from this ambitious continuing enterprise, a fact which sheds a good deal of light on David Jones's use of the term "fragments" in the titles of both works.

Jones must be seen in the light of that Romantic consciousness in which fragmentariness can be a feature of supposed wholes. Coleridge's most vital work is to be found in his pure fragments: in the haphazard entries in his notebooks and in the marginal notation of books he was reading. But the Biographia Literaria, as one critic has termed it, is a "rubble-heap" work, "where a mosaic content of borrowed passages from various sources is complemented by meandering inattention to and indeed denial of conventional structure".[44] The remark could equally well be applied to The Anathemata, the preface to which begins with David Jones's quote from Nennius, "I have made a heap of all that I could find."[45]

In addition to such fragmentation within nominal wholes, the nineteenth century is especially fecund in explicit fragmentation and incompleteness. To approach a single aspect of the matter more directly, one can simply open the Oxford edition of Gerard Manley Hopkins's poetical works, and in the table of contents observe that the "Unfinished Poems and Fragments..." (1862-1889) actually take up more space than the supposedly completed poems. As with Hopkins, so with Jones: the reality that is faced and addressed by both poets is that of imperfection, fragmentation, muddle. David Jones wrote of The Anathemata and by extension of all his work: "I regard my book more as a series of fragments, fragmented bits, chance scraps really, of records of things, vestiges of sorts and kinds of disciplinae, that have come my way by this channel or that influence.

Pieces of stuffs that happen to mean something to me and which I see as perhaps making a kind of coat of many colours, such as belonged to "that dreamer" in the Hebrew myth."[46] Chance scraps and fragmented muddle do not make for mystery, but they are the precursors to full sacramental awareness. Hopkins in "The Windhover" sees the random qualities of the bird - "Brute beauty and valour and act" - but only apprehends fleetingly the mystery which unites and gives form and purpose to those elements: "sheer plod" remains. The impossibility of grasping that moment simultaneously witnesses to the actual dominance of fragmentation; thus Coleridge:

**"I can contemplate nothing but parts, and parts are all little - ! My mind feels as if it ached to behold and have something great - something <u>one and in-divisible</u> - and it is only in the faith of this that rocks or waterfalls, mountains or cavern give me the sense of sublimity or majesty! - But in this faith all things counterfeit infinity!"**

The months in the trenches and the dislocation of war caused David Jones to "contemplate nothing but parts", whether in terms of a deracinated, war-torn landscape or the metaphysical ruin of a civilisation of which he formed an increasingly isolated fragment. The search for "something one and indivisible" which would unite and comprehend this outer and inner dereliction begins here, and with the search begins the construction of an aesthetic theory which is the continuation

of the tradition in which Hopkins and Coleridge also found themselves working. The two works which emerge as the products of this search can be differentiated by Coleridge's terms "fancy" and the "imagination": in In Parenthesis, it seems to me, Jones gives us a work which is the result of his immediate and ubiquitous sense of fragmentation and which is a product of the fancy: this, according to Coleridge, is the quality which puts together a work from bits and pieces raided from elsewhere. Jones openly acknowledges his obsessive pre-occupation with experimental form in In Parenthesis and its eclectic joinery finally denies it "otherness". Whereas in The Anathemata we find a work of the sacramental imagination: although the Coleridgean imagination uses whatever it can find, it fuses the influences into a new creative whole, aesthetically distinct from the parts that make it up. The search, then, is directed towards a full and adequate realisation of that sacramental imagination.

## Westminster Art School and Ditchling: "The Mystery of Faith"

Rene Hague has remarked that the years 1919-1921 at the Westminster School of Art were to lead to an important change in David Jones's life and thought. "In the trenches, he (David Jones) says, he had been a Catholic at heart, and he had from early childhood been drawn, without knowing it, towards the sacramental teaching of the Church."[47] In a letter to Hague written from the nursing home at Harrow,

David Jones describes his first observation of the celebration of the Catholic Mass, which he stumbled across one day in France, "between the support trenches and the reserve line" when he should have been collecting firewood. The fragmented, ruined shell of a building is seen first: "I noticed what had been a farm building now a wreckage in the main..."; there being no opening or door,"I found a crack against which I put my eye expecting to see empty darkness...but what I saw was... the back of a sacerdos in a gilt-hued planeta, two points of flickering candle-light no doubt lent an extra sense of goldness to the vestment and a golden warmth... You can imagine what a great marvel it was for me...for at that spying unintentionally on the Mass in Flanders in the Forward Zone I felt immediately that oneness between the offerant and those toughs that clustered around him in the dim-lit byre...".[48]

Although not yet "formally" a Catholic, David Jones described himself thus: "I was 'inside' a Catholic in the trenches in 1917, though not so formally until 1921",[49] and this anecdote encapsulates his spontaneous approach to what could be described as a Catholic mentality. Essentially, it poses what David Jones was subsequently to develop into a theory of art and a critique of his contemporary civilisation: the place and meaning of ritual, or sign, in human life. The account operates on diffent levels: it is concerned with significance, and the immanence of sign-making in an otherwise ruined environment, but the passage is in itself a sign of its maker and thus embodies its own possibility.

The essential polarity of the scene witnessed - between the warmth and colour of the ritual and the "empty darkness" - is held in paratactic tension by the hidden observer who is the bridge-builder between the two significant worlds. Further, the setting of the byre is an "anamnesis" or deliberate re-calling of that stable in Bethlehem by the artist, as he no doubt recalls the various Renaissance masters who have painted such a scene in its "golden warmth" before him. It is a retrieval of meaning from that empty darkness of fragmentation which exists behind the trenches and within the intellectually confused mind of the observer, confirming that, however imperfectly realised David Jones's understanding of Catholic dogma, here is tradition and stability to offset against the increasing mechanisation and process of contemporary life. The principal attraction for Jones is as yet not so much religious as aesthetic: the implications of sacramental theology depend by definition upon the primitive efficacy of the symbol, to which as an artist in a utilitarian world he already felt committed. Beyond the literal description of this scene, however, we discover its metaphorical significance: the reader is invited to "share" in this epiphany with the writer; we are led into the poet's vision of mystery. It is therefore a place of encounter within which we meet the poet and the world he has created. He ushers us into the process of his experience, so that we share in its very unfolding. The writer's vision is a vision of mystery, and mystery can be expressed most adequately - though never completely - by sacramental symbol.

Symbol leaves the mystery intact, because it works by suggestion, intimation - it draws things into itself. We are not allowed simply to look on, to stand apart, but are drawn into the experience, which is the experience of the poet and of his world. Poetry of sacramental symbol is necessarily a poetry of encounter.

The act of perceiving symbols, what Coleridge termed "the primary imagination", or of making symbols ("the secondary imagination") is as we have seen essentially a religious act, a finite participation in the infinite creative act, the "fiat", of God, just as creation itself is the supreme symbol. The religious act is an act of faith, since in all sacramental symbolism (those symbols which truly "partake of the Reality which they render intelligble") an act of faith is necessary to perceive the true unity of being - the consubstantiality - within the differences. In the Coleridgean sense, an act of faith is a commitment of the complete self, intellect, will and emotions. This it is that, like the act of the poet, "brings the whole soul of man into activity". And in the passage quoted above we see not the Coleridgean act of faith, but a response which is at root emotional and aesthetic. The intellect and the will remain detached: this is an artist's response and explains why I have placed the passage in the development of my argument which deals with David Jones and artistic apprenticeship since it seems here that David Jones receives confirmation of ideas which had been nascent during his experience of war - a commitment to the symbolic or

sacramental life - and which anticipate at so many points Thomist sacramental sensibility.

"When, in 1919, I recommenced my studies as an art student", writes David Jones, "my fellow students and I wasted a good deal of our time...discussing 'the nature of art'... . For one reason or another certain queries touching what Christians did or did not assert with regard to the eucharist were at that time much in my mind, and though I in no way connected these queries with the queries concerning the arts, I sometimes found myself thinking of the two matters together, though still unrelatedly. The question of analogy seemed not to occur until certain Post-Impressionist theories began to bulk larger in our student conversation. Then, with relative suddenness, the analogy between what we called 'the Arts' and the things that Christians called the eucharistic signs became (if still but vaguely) apparent. It became increasingly evident that this analogy applied to the whole garment of 'making'. For one of the more rewarding notions implicit in the post-Impressionist idea was that a work is a 'thing' and not (necessarily) the impression of some other thing."[50]

The tentative steps taken here by David Jones were to prove crucial in the formation of his mature ideology, for here in a Newmanesque way the convergence of probabilities which leads to artistic and theological "assent" can be discerned. The simple fusion of two separate intellectual disciplines

allows David Jones to see as identical the qualities which he had at first thought analogical. To Jones a Sacrament, painting or poem are defined and distinguished by two qualities: each is "gratuitous" or non-utilitarian in nature, and each is incarnational, the outward visible sign of an inward spiritual or imaginative reality. Sharing these qualities, "all Ars and all religio" are united, to the point where ultimately David Jones can declare: "No artefacture no Christian religion".[51] The key premise of his whole ideology is that artistic activity is interchangeable with sacramental religious activity, which in turn can be located within the Coleridgean view of the imagination as "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM".

The experiences of the trenches and of art school led David Jones to press his aesthetic ideas and his inchoate theological intuitions into the service of his art, but these fragments of converging probabilities needed unification and with his reception into the Catholic Church in September 1921 and his sojourn with Eric Gill at Ditchling, the "whole soul of man" is brought at last into activity.

The period David Jones spent at Ditchling and at Capel-y-ffin under Eric Gill (1919-1924) was critical in his intellectual development, the complex influences he discovered there modifying the direction of his thinking in a manner of ways. The Ruskinian community of artists and craftsmen and

"the anti-industrial game we played in general" according to Hilary Pepler,[52] struck a particularly sympathetic chord in David Jones whose dislike of technological excess had been a notable legacy of his war experience. By selectively adapting for his own purposes some of the ideas current at Ditchling, David Jones was able to deepen and impose a semblance of order upon the confused insights with which he had been working during his two years at the Westminster Art School.

At the centre of Ditchling's theological life was the contemporary orthodoxy of neo-Thomism, the revived philosophy of Aquinas, whose most revolutionary principle in an age of Platonism had been that the soul's activities and perceptions are dependent not upon fantasy, but upon the experiences of the senses. "It means...that sense experience forms the starting point for all...knowledge, and that in this life (man) cannot know anything, even what is divinely revealed, without the use of images".[53] We have already seen that the Catholic system of Sacraments is, in effect, a rationalisation of Aquinas's "theologically based worldliness... and theology open to the world".[54] The deliberate application of neo-Thomist philosophy was often misunderstood by the amateurs at Ditchling, but David Jones in an essay of 1960 provides evidence of the Thomist dictum that man is dependent for abstract knowledge on the perceptions of his senses:

> "...the belief of the Catholic Church commits its adherents, in a most inescapable manner, to the body and the embodied; hence to history, to locality, to epoch and site, to sense - perception, to the contactual, the known, the felt, the seen, the handled, the cared for, the tended, the conserved; to the qualitative and to the intimate.
>
> All of which and more especially the two last, precludes the ersatz, and tends to a certain mistrust of the unembodied concept".[55]

Catholicism, for David Jones, is a religion "explicitly dependent upon small, intimate, enclosed, known and dear creaturely signs" and man, in his true and essential nature, is "the only extra-utilist, or sacramentalist".[56] If Jones's Catholicism is occasionally to be seen as a heterodox mixture, it is true that it inspires him as it inspired Hopkins before him, into a vivid sense of the world as analogically ordered, with encoded, but decipherable, significance. Given his habit of thinking in analogies, David Jones finds in Aquinas's "system" a licence for the relationship he had already privately intuited between the ideal and the sensory as the essential factor in art and ritual. Moreover, Hopkins's world which is "charged with the grandeur of God" is for David Jones signed everywhere by the divine finger. It is the artist's duty and delight to celebrate and search out those signs or Sacraments (in a religious sense) and symbols (in an artistic sense) which Aquinas had posited as being the fusion of ideal and real. The unification of Post-Impressionist theory the

one hand with Catholic eucharistic theory on the other for David Jones was dependent upon an incarnational theory of knowledge: "the artist is, at bottom and always, an inveterate believer in 'transubstantiation' of some sort. The sign must be the thing signified under forms of his particular art".[57] Here David Jones builds upon and develops the Coleridgean notion of the "consubstantiality" of all being, the "one life within us and abroad". Speaking of the Scriptures, Coleridge speaks of the faculty of the imagination as "that reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the Reason in Images of the Sense, and organising (as it were) the flux of the Reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves and consubstantial with the truths, of which they are the conductors".

In elevating "the life of the field" above technological and mechanised progress, Ditchling not only confirmed a tendency to dualism within David Jones's nature, but also paradoxically went against the synthesising nature of Aquinas's thought. David Jones's perception of a division in the heart of man was characterised many years later by his statement that "Man... is Lord of the Two Marches, and must keep the difficult dignity of his dual role";[58] many critics, such as Elizabeth Ward and Neil Corcoran have leapt upon this notion of division or confrontation in David Jones's writings, between the "world of technics" and "the world of lyrics", or between the worlds of matter and spirit, and claimed that out of this confrontation

David Jones created a way of seeing: "the great dualistic myth which governed David Jones's life".[59] In the light of what has already been adduced as David Jones's "debt" to Coleridge and Hopkins, it seems to be very short-sighted not to go beyond Jones's essays to the evidence of the poetry and the art where one finds not dualism, but the Coleridgean bi-polar myth, a paratactic holding in tension of the worlds of matter and spirit. The synthesising nature of Thomist sacramental symbol is at the root of David Jones's developing aesthetic and religious awareness and it seems to me not so much an incorrect as an incomplete reading of his work to insist upon antithesis as the dominant feature. Antithesis, it is true, is present in David Jones's work, as it is in that of Coleridge and Hopkins: the superficial reality of fragmentation in for example "Kubla Khan" or "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire..." or the stark opposition of "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves" is what confronts the reader <u>at first sight</u>. But as has been shown in the preceeding chapters, it is only by "saying and unsaying", by positing thesis and antithesis, that we reach the positive result or synthesis. What frequently appears contradiction or disjunction in the sacramental tradition presupposes wholeness; despite the local "mystery" of complex and irreducible meaning, the "certainty" rests in the overall schema or structure.

Mindful of this, then, we turn to the two fundamental literary and religious influences at Ditchling, which were central to the discussions and arguments in the community and

which rendered central and explicit the idea which David Jones had perceived at the heart of symbolist theory: Jacques Maritain's Art et Scolastique, published in a somewhat eccentric translation at Ditchling by Pepler in 1921, and Maurice de la Taille's massive exposition of eucharistic theology, Mysterium Fidei.

Maritain's book is essentially a drawing out of the aesthetic theory which he finds implicit in Aquinas and Scholasticism and provides one of the contexts for Jones's developing thought. The scholastic philosophy developed and adopted for its theology by Catholicism, as we have seen in the first Chapter, was re-emphasised not only by the Thomist revival in the English Catholic circles in which David Jones moved from the 1920s, but also by the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, which as early as 1875 enjoined the study of Aquinas on all students of theology. Maritain's value for David Jones and others was to show how it was possible to unify the apparent rift in modern consciousness brought about by the Industrial Revolution: Maritain refused to divorce "artist" and "artisan" and considered that "art is a habitus of the practical understanding". Further he denied that art is mimesis, and asserted that it consists in making, composing or constructing, and that according to the laws of the object itself to be set up in being (whether it be ship, house, carpet, coloured cloth or carven block)".[60] This was of fundamental importance to David Jones, who discerned in Maritain the coherence and practical use of the Scholastic

synthesis, the consequence of which was a liberating effect on his role as a twentieth century artist. Scholasticism, in short, had the great value of being "consonant with man as a sign-making animal".[61] Maritain's work acted as a link or "pontifex" between mediaevals and moderns, and it is in this unification, not confrontation, that David Jones finds his essential stimulus.

Jones derived his evolution of the concept of "sign" as sacramental symbol not from Maritain, but from the French theologian, Maurice de la Taille, whose Mysterium Fidei David Jones was aware of in some form from 1926, and which he actually read in 1934.[62] De la Taille's understanding of the Roman mass and its sacramental, or sign-making, character is in its turn an effective re-presenting of Aquinas's definition of a Sacrament as "signum efficax", or for Jones, "an efficacious sign", which indicates, in theological terms, that a Sacrament infuses divine grace into its recipient. In de la Taille's definition of a sacrament as "a symbol that effects by itself in the mind what it signifies" and in David Jones's appropriation of sign as sacramental symbol, we find the transformation of a theological definition into an aesthetic theory. The theological sacrament is taken over by Jones as the natural territory and preserve of the artist, and in so doing he recalls at the beginning of the twentieth century what Coleridge had effected at the beginning of the nineteenth. As David Jones says in one of the notes to the late poem "The Fatigue", de la Taille "in the early 1920's

open (ed) windows and made sense of relationships altogether outside the immediate context of his strictly theological thesis".[63]

At the heart of de la Taille's thesis is to be found his discussion of the institution of the eucharist. Here he understands Christ to have done literally, in fact, on the hill of Calvary, what he had already done symbolically, or in sign, in the Upper Room of Maundy Thursday, and what he orders the Church to do, in memory of Him, throughout history. Christ is, then, understood by David Jones as doing in the institution of the eucharist what it is the essence of all art to do - symbolising, transforming, ensuring future preservation through the act of re-presentation. It is thus that Christ, in the phrase from de la Taille which David Jones uses as epigraph to Epoch and Artist, "placed Himself in the order of signs".

The Mass is, for Jones, itself an "art work", which involves "an intention to represent, recall or show-forth something under certain signs and by manual acts".[64] This must also be the role of the artist, for in David Jones's theory, art becomes a showing forth, under other forms, of other realities. The things man makes are "signs of something other", man is "unavoidably a sacramentalist and...his works are sacramental in character".[65] For David Jones, echoing Coleridge, art is a "religious" activity, and the essential activity of searching out and re-presenting "valid signs", making them

"other", is the responsibility of the artist. This essential act of "anamnesis" is particularly incumbent upon the poet, who is to act as a "rememberer" and whose medium, language, is the most familiar of all artistic media. In art, says David Jones in one of his most important essays, "Art and Sacrament", there must always be, "a re-calling, a re-presenting again, anaphora, anamnesis". The term "anamnesis" David Jones met in Dom Gregory Dix's study of the Church's worship The Shape of the Liturgy, where it is discussed as the word used in the Greek scriptures for Christ's eucharistic command "Do this in memory of me", "Do this for my anamnesis". The definition of the word given by Dix, "a 're-calling' or 're-presenting' before God of an event in the past, so that it becomes here and now operative by its effects", is clearly very close to David Jones's own definition of "sign". When he uses it, he is fully intent on making those signs "a living, incarnate reality and an embodiment of a dense recession of human values, attachments and significations".[67] By these incarnations of art which turn the world and its objects into "signs" and "anathemata", is history redeemed for David Jones, and by extension, for us.

It is the duty of the poet, as "rememberer", to "keep open the lines of communication" with the past. And, believing that "the artist is not responsible for the future but he is, in a certain sense, responsible to the future", David Jones thinks that the way in which these lines might

best be kept open by the poet is "by handing on such fragmented bits of our own inheritance as we have ourselves received".[68] The word "inheritance" is also placed at the opening of the preface to The Anathemata where the poet's function is described as the "showing forth of an inheritance", and its meaning is akin to Eliot's definition of "tradition" in his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent". Jones's definition of the poet as "rememberer" comes in response to that same crisis which prompted Eliot's essay and which is defined by Hugh Kenner when he observes that "civilisation is memory, and after 1918 effective memory was almost lost".[69]

The "inheritance" which Jones, consciously and unwittingly, shows forth is that of sacramentalism; the "fragmented bits" of "effective memory" which the communication lines of the past make available to him are incarnated in the "finished" work of art, which is thus a repository of the "deposits" or mythus of the past. Eliot remarked that the poet's mind is "a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together".[70] The phrases and images from, amongst others, Coleridge and Hopkins are readily found, but more profoundly David Jones recalls and represents nineteenth century aesthetic theory as the basis of a personal elaboration of a general context of ideas - Thomist, modernist, anthropological - so that if Dix, Maritain and de la Taille are the local and contemporary influences, early and later nineteenth century "poesis" is where David Jones is most firmly rooted.

## "In Parenthesis": "...giving a shape and significance..."

The experience of warfare at the Western Front, both in Flanders and on the Somme, was to provide Jones with the stimulus for the writing of his first literary work, In Parenthesis. It was not, however, until some ten years after that experience that David Jones recollected his thoughts sufficiently to begin shaping and distilling his feelings.

> "In 1927 or '28 in a house at Portslade near Brighton, from the balcony of which I used to make paintings of the sea, I began to write down some sentences which turned out to be the initial passages of In Parenthesis published some ten years later. This was a beginning of another sort. I had no idea of what I was letting myself in for."[71]

Three remarks here are worthy of comment: the first concerns the formulaic nature of the "sentences" which were to form the genesis of In Parenthesis. Out of the scattered fragments of autobiography recalled here, the fixed concentrated expressions loom, the disturbed "dust on a bowl of rose-leaves". The experience and the difficulty of remembering, its illusory nature, are to be redeemed from the poet's personal history. Secondly the "beginning" reminds us that David Jones was not embarking upon any individual exorcism of neurosis derived from the war,

but rather an impersonal and deliberate experiment in form, exchanging the paint pot for words and attempting to determine whether problems of "form" and "content" were in each case the same. Thirdly, and as an extension of the former point, David Jones remarks upon the fact that he used to paint the sea from the balcony. In many of the paintings of this period and later, the scene is framed by a window or balcony: we are obliged to view through the formally-contrived shape, which imposes order on a restless scene. David Jones later noted:

> "Ruskin, writing of Turner's treatment of the sea, says that however calm the sea he painted he always remembered that same sea heavy and full of discontent under storm. That is half the secret, more than half, of good painting, of good art. Great painting triumphs...because it has every sort of undertone and overtone, both of form and content, it is both peace and war;...it must hint at December snow, when summer's heat is in the text. In painting a persistent 'desire and pursuit of the whole' is needed".[72]

And, one might add, in poetry too, for David Jones in trying "to make a shape in words", as he described In Parenthesis, was applying a neo-Thomist discrimination between "making" and "doing", to the sphere of aesthetics, as well as trying to give form to the personal and public dislocation that the First World War had engendered. The experimental nature of its form,

the unorthodox use of language and syntax and the prevalence of metaphorical over literal content, require In Parenthesis to be understood alongside "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and "The Waste Land" rather than any of Brooke's or Sassoon's poetry. "In Parenthesis" is as much a work about war as "The Wreck" or "The Ancient Mariner" are poems about the sea. David Jones has found himself working, as Elizabeth Ward has pointed out, within the broad configuration of the cultural pattern of the post-war years in which the rational and materialistic were abandoned as sources of artistic inspiration in favour of the symbolic, imaginative and mystical. "Modern man", wrote Jung, "does not understand how much his 'rationalism' (which has destroyed his capacity to respond to numinous symbols and ideas) has put him at the mercy of the psychic 'underworld'... . As scientific understanding has grown, so our world has become dehumanised".[73] The echoes of Coleridge are distinctly audible. Indeed, Coleridge's "one life" embodies that harmony between man and nature, whose loss Jung deplored in terms of a failure of the ability to think symbolically, and which David Jones sees imaged in the cave artists of Lascaux and the mediaeval cathedral builders.

In his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent", T.S. Eliot writes: "The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality", and that extinction of personality is dependent upon the artist or poet possessing an "historical sense", involving "a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence",[74] in

relation to which the artist's individual personality remains insignificant. Hence David Jones, who writes in the preface to The Anathemata, "the workman must be dead to himself while engaged upon the work, otherwise we have that sort of "self-expression" which is as undesirable in the painter or the writer as in the carpenter...".[75] But if the idea was to re-capture Eliot's "historical sense", to become one with the cave painters of Lascaux, then the practice demanded a suitable literary method and that was articulated by Eliot in an essay on Joyce's Ulysses:

> **"In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him... . It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history... . Instead of a narrative method, we may now use the mythical method."**[76]

David Jones was to use this "mythical method" both in In Parenthesis and in The Anathemata, since it seemed to proffer a means of redeeming the past and making it significant for the present, but David Jones's major problem in utilising this way of seeing was discovering the appropriate "myth" for him. As Neil Corcoran points out, Yeat's "Byzantium" and Pound's "Cathay" were inaccessible and largely irrelevant, but in his nostalgia for the land of his father, David Jones sought and found the idea of an organic community, hierarchical

and immobile, and in his desire to receive the signs of a rich, but lost, cultural inheritance, the things of Wales were central and basic. The Celtic "myth" provided one of the poles on which David Jones's mythical method was posited; the other pole was that of Christianity itself and the "myth" of God incarnate.

The nineteenth century bears witness to the fixities and definites of truth crumbling ever more rapidly into the stream of process, so that David Jones's search for wholeness and permanence is also the quest of Coleridge and Hopkins. Coleridge, like David Jones, saw the need to find again the unified sensibility that had been lost, as much to the nineteenth as to the twentieth centuries, and the only way possible was through religious vision. Only when man is able to perceive the world as God perceives it, by "participating in the creative act of the infinite I AM" can he see the vision of the world's wholeness, the "translucence of the Eternal through and in the Temporal". The means of searching for the three poets is symbol and the symbolic vision for all three poets is profoundly sacramental.

The symbolism which underlies all myth, and that of the Incarnation itself, makes us grasp "presentationally" the eternal truths of human nature through the particularity of an individual situation. The mythic symbol is irreducible, an aggregation of collective meanings which issues in density of metaphor, and in which meaning and form cannot be separated. This we see most clearly and successfully in

The Anathemata, but less so in In Parenthesis where narrative and mythic method are occasionally at odds and where the objective correlative, as in "The Wreck of the Deutschland", ultimately fails the vision of the poet. Both In Parenthesis and "The Wreck of the Deutschland" suffer from dis-integration, so that one of the "poles" of the paratactic sacramental view of the artist is not fully realised, and re-integration is not possible.

It is illuminating, before examining in some detail these claims with regard to In Parenthesis, to consider other critical reactions to the text, and the extent to which In Parenthesis can be considered as part of the corpus of literary material designated "war poetry". The work has been seen variously as the logical terminus of that series of attempts to master imaginatively the British experience of war; as a genuinely heroic epic and successful departure from the personal lyric of Brooke and others; and even a retrograde work, "an honourable miscarriage".[77] When these war-orientated critics have actually taken notice of David Jones's own declaration that "this writing is called In Parenthesis because I have written it in a kind of space between - I don't know between quite what - but as you turn aside to do something; and because...the war itself was a parenthesis...and also because our curious type of existence here is altogether in parenthesis", then they do begin to see the experimental formal nature of the poem as paramount and not its content. John H. Johnston has compared the techniques of In Parenthesis to "The Waste

Land", and Bernard Bergonzi has noted the influence on David Jones of "the interpenetration of past and present in 'The Waste Land' and perhaps also (of) Eliot's stress in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', on the contemporaneity of significant literary experience".[80] But it is the significance of David Jones's converging aesthetic and theological experiences which are more relevant to an understanding of In Parenthesis, as we have seen, and the critic Elizabeth Ward in her book David Jones: Myth Maker, comes closest to understanding In Parenthesis as the expression of "the anti-rationalist tendency which peaked in the 1920's" coupled with "the manipulation of mythological parallels". For Ward, "it is In Parenthesis which successfully maintains the creative tension between actual and general" to which The Anathemata aspires, but which, in her view, the later work fails to achieve. She continues:

> "The final effect (of In Parenthesis) is therefore less escapist than reconciliatory, constructive, illuminating, encompassing the poles on which In Parenthesis as a whole turns: the closeness of opposite qualities, 'grace' and 'mauled earth', meaning and unmeaning, the essential ambiguity of human experience."[81]

The poles of In Parenthesis are indeed "grace" and "mauled earth", metaphysical and physical, but ultimately we are insufficiently made aware of the alternative reality which

Jones is trying to establish; that "truth" which the poet is self-consciously striving for does emerge in the poem - or at least a truth: in the very structure of the language and of the poem itself we see the poetic techniques being ordered towards tranfiguration, and at the crucial point of the poem in Part 7, Jones seeks for an explanation for the death of the men in Mametz Wood, just as Hopkins in "The Wreck" asks of the nun's words before death, "...what did she mean?". The answer for both poets lies in the fact of resurrection, but it is a fact imposed by Hopkins at the conclusion of "The Wreck"; we find an imposition of a similar sort in In Parenthesis, except that the mythic "truth" which is expressed here, and to which the whole poem seems ordered, is the primitive myth of vegetative regeneration imaged in the activity of the "Queen of the Woods". It is a pantheistic truth, inspired by the particular setting of the waste-land trenches, and by Jones's search for "a long-rooted, living community" settled on terrain, "made sacred by ancestral associations".[82] Jones indicated the climate of thought in the 1920s and 1930s which answered to his own artisic - and theological - concerns:

> "...the 'findings' or 'soundings' on the waters of the visual arts tallied with those of the aural and oral arts and these together had correspondences with certain works of scholarship. For example, it was no accident that Tom Eliot's poem 'The Waste Land' should have had for its main inspiration Jessie Weston's treatise From Ritual

> to Romance. Nor was it an accident that many of us were especially interested in various sections of Frazer's Golden Bough and less monumental but more recent anthropological, mythological and archaeological studies."[84]

The sources of inspiration were sought, then, in the primitive, the occult, or the mystical, in deliberate opposition to the materialistic trend of the post-war years. Ward is wrong, it seems to me, in emphasising the fulfilled re-integration of nature and grace in the poem, for as Jones wrote "in the very core and navel of the wood there seemed a vacuum...",[84] and it is that vacuum of meaning which, despite being itself a token which should allow the natural to be read sacramentally, all the resources of the poem cannot fill.

In Parenthesis possesses what can be termed a narrative method as well as a mythical method: the former is the framework of the poem denoting exactly the period of the war covered, as the Preface indicates from "early in December 1915" to "early in July 1916". This period happens also to be the length of time that David Jones spent in his first period of service on the Western Front, from training in England, embarkation, and culminating in the Mametz offensive of July 1916 by the Royal Welch Fusiliers. We have, then, a literal record by David Jones which, as Colin Hughes has shown in his work David Jones: The Man who was on the Field: "In Parenthesis" as straight reporting, is an exact account of the 15th Battalion's activities in France. Private

John Ball even suffers the same leg wound in Part 7 as David Jones himself had done. The faithful recording of detail accords with David Jones's artist's eye and is reminiscent of Hopkins's, and beyond him, Aquinas's, stress on the quiddity of objects. But like Hopkins in "The Wreck", we always discern "below" the literal framing device, Jones's mythical method.

The text at first sight is a muddle of fragmented memory, disembodied voices and incomplete perception. We strive to "place", to make sense out of this "shape in words", and in so doing we are drawn into the poet's dilemma, who in time of crisis, must attempt not to comprehend, but in Coleridgean terms, to apprehend the pattern and re-present it. In short we are invited to participate in the experience, not to stand outside it and this, I would maintain, is one peculiar strength of this poem: through the symbol-making and perceiving of the poet we are drawn into a poetry of encounter, not only with the poet himself, but also with our deepest selves. This is one integration the poem successfully achieves. We are asked to re-enact the fragmented sense perception of the original experience and to impose our imagination, just as the poet has done mythopoeically, to achieve some kind of understanding out of this disintegration. Since experience - whether of war or peace, it does not matter - is one of separation and sundering, the role of art and poetry is to rejoin those original elements. For Jones the tragic existence of war becomes an eikon for the larger nature of our situation,

in the same way that shipwreck is a correlative for Hopkins's personal and civilisational experience.

We are led into the poem by a series of epigraphs which in their allusiveness, deliberately frame and distance the text, implying a sense of narrative and historical significance to the war which runs counter to the abstract nature of the text itself. Several epigraphs are taken from the sixth-century Welsh epic "Y Gododdin", in particular that to the title, "seinnyessit y gledyf ym penn mameu" - "his sword rang in mothers' heads" - and culminating in the quotation on the title page to Part 6: "Men went to Catraeth: free of speech was their host...death's sure meeting place, the goal of their marching". In the futility and slaughter of the ancient warfare, David Jones intends us to see an allegorical parallel and not just in terms of the wastefulness of conventional aggression, but also the perennial conflict between opposing ideologies. Beyond that he remarks:

> "...the choice of fragments of this poem ('Y Gododdin') as 'texts' is not altogether without point in that it connects us with a very ancient unity and mingling of races; with the island as a corporate inheritance, with the remembrance of Rome as a European unity. The drunken 300 at Catraeth fell as representatives of the island of Britain."[85]

The most significant of the epigraphs to act, literally and metaphorically, as a framing device, is that from the Mabinogi:

"Evil betide me if I do not open the door to know if that is true which is said concerning it. So he opened the door...and when they had looked, they were conscious of all the evils they had ever sustained, and of all the friends and companions they had lost and of all the misery that had befallen them...".

We are invited to go through that door with the poet, and rather like Alice's mirror, what we find is distortion. War becomes the metaphor for the whole civilisational situation: disarray, regression into violence and moral obtuseness, the fear of a new "dark age" in which civilisation itself, as we have known it, may disappear or be confined to small islands of archaic conservation, imaged in Part 3 of In Parenthesis as "the homing perfume of wood burned, at the determination of ways;...a folk-life here, a people, a culture already developed, already venerable and rooted."[86] By opening that door evil is discovered, rather like Bluebeard's wife, Fatima, who, overcome by curiosity, opens the room forbidden to her and discovers in it the bodies of Bluebeard's previous wives. Horror-struck, she drops the key which becomes indelibly stained with blood. The recessions of the metaphor are, for David Jones, deliberate and dense, implying death and destruction brought about through man's greed and ignorance, and the loss of innocence. The myth of the Fall runs more strongly through In Parenthesis than any other particular religious impulse. It is apposite therefore that the abiding image of In Parenthesis is the tree or wood, that "dark and sacred wood", to which the men are drawn to their deaths. But it is strictly their fall which is the

concern of In Parenthesis and any re-integration, or reconciliation which the poem works towards, is between man and the natural setting, not between man and God. Thus Private John Ball, posted as first Day Sentry, sees the "twisted wood beyond":

> "He found the wood, visually so near, yet for the feet forbidden by a great fixed gulf, a sight somehow to powerfully hold his mind. To the woods of all the world is this potency - to move the bowels of us".[87]
>
> (my emphasis)

Appropriately, the Queen of the Woods performs the obsequies: "Her awarding hands can pluck for each their fragile prize."[88] Not until The Anathemata with its dominant, all-embracing image of "the Axile Tree", the tree on which the world revolves, the Cross, do we find the complete resolution of the spheres of nature and grace and the transformation of the Tree of man's fall into the symbol of his resurrection. The vision of the poet in In Parenthesis is not so much of a spiritual, specifically Christian, mystery, as of a chthonic, vegetable, Eleusinian ritual. If the stylistic debt of the poet in this avowedly experimental shape in words is to a tradition in which Aquinas, Coleridge and Hopkins loom large, then the local and immediate influence on content is Frazer and The Golden Bough.

It is important at this point to consider the details of the text to see how narrative content fits with formal experiment. The facts of Part One, the surface dramatic "plot", can be discerned easily: the Battalion is being prepared for battle overseas, it continues with the march to the coast, embarkation, and the sea crossing to France and terminates with the men arriving "exposed and apprehensive in this new world". But if one looks at the opening paragraphs of the section, a medley of "voices" assails the reader:

" '49 Wyatt, 01549 Wyatt.
Coming sergeant.
Pick 'em up, pick 'em up - I'll stalk within yer chamber.
Private Leg...sick
Private Ball...absent.
'01 Ball, '01 Ball, Ball of No. 1.
Where's Ball, 25201 Ball - you corporal,
Ball of your section.
Movement round and about the Commanding Officer.
Bugler, will you sound 'Orderly Sergeants'." (p.1)

which culminates in the arrival, humorously and ironically described by David Jones, of Private Ball:

"Heavily jolting and sideway jostling...a certain clinking ending in a shuffling of the feet sidelong - all clear and distinct in that silence peculiar to parade grounds and to refectories. The silence of a high order, full of peril in the breaking of it, like the coming on parade of John Ball." (p.1)

The difficulty of locating tone and authorial voice is deliberate; already the language is an amalgam of the colloquial and formal, the literary allusion insinuating its way into the apparently superficial dialogue of the parade ground. Moreover, our senses are confused by the lack of differentiation in punctuation: speech merges into objective description and both are constantly metamorphosed into more than superficial meaning. By the oblique reference to "refectories" and "a high order" David Jones causes us to see the soldiers as the image of other novices. Already the apparent spiritual "bankruptcy of the occasion" is being made "other": the "metaphysical order" of the poem begins to work in tension with the reality of the scene described.

The language of the work, like its central consciousness, refuses to remain steady: just as the focal "voice" of the poem shifts from impersonal narrator to the thoughts of Private Ball - "You feel exposed and apprehensive in this world" - so the linguistic cadences parody military speech, whilst dissolving into archaic formalism - "His imaginings as to the precise relationship of this general indictment from the book to his own naked mess-tin were with suddeness and most imperatively impinged upon..." - and liturgical rhythm,

"Kipt' that step there.
Keep that proper distance.
Keept' y'r siction o'four...".

Language enacts consciousness, then, paratactically holding in tension the duality of fact and idea, but above all by showing the fragmentary nature of mind: phrases and clauses stand incomplete amidst sentences broken-backed and inchoate: "Some like tight belts and some like loose belts - trussed-up pockets - cigarettes in ammunition pouches - rifle-bolts, webbing, buckles and rain - gotta light mate - give us a match chum." The radical dislocation of language images the fractured consciousness involved in the poet's "remembering" and in what he remembers: the experience is, after all, described by David Jones as "the Break".

It is, however, in this disintegtration that we are able to see the possibility of re-integration, since operating below the factual level of the text and unifying the fragmented consciousness of Jones's experience is the poet's imagination, dissolving, as Coleridge has put it, only in order to re-create. The yoking together of apparently disparate metaphors and the loosing of fixed categories of reality, so that we perceive associatively rather than logically, is what the poem is concerned to show forth. The style embodies a subject matter which enacts at one level this quasi-moral aim of the poet, that is to immerse the reader, like the soldier, in this altered state of being and to re-educate by catharsis. Thus the soldiers' arrival at the front is the beginning of a process of learning, like Brooke's "swimmers into cleanness leaping", except that David Jones ironically and savagely debunks Brooke's notion that somehow these novices are to

be purified. For David Jones "this new world" is a waste land, a paradise lost, in which the war serves as a metaphor for spiritual trial, and it begins in archetypal fashion with the "rite de passage" of the sea-voyage and the pointed allusion to Coleridge's poem of punishment, exile and apparent redemption in the epigraph: "The many men so beautiful". The recognition of a tripartite movement in Coleridge's poem - the journey out, the trial and revelation, the journey back - has an obvious bearing on Jones's mythic method. This movement, deliberately alluded to by David Jones, rehearses one of the oldest forms of European romance tale found, for example, in the Arthurian legends and the Middle English Christian - chivalric romance, "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight". Coleridge's Mariner, Sir Gawain and Private John Ball go through similar adventures. The importance of David Jones's reference to Coleridge must be emphasised, for by so doing, he obliges us to consider anew In Parenthesis in the light of Coleridge's poem and the comparison is particularly illuminating.

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" has been the subject of numerous 'interpretations', often based on logically imposed schemas from outside, rather than trying to come to terms with the poem as a whole, the product of an Imagination which "gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truth, of which they are the conductors".[89] The interpretations of In Parenthesis have been broadly similar to those of "The Rime": biographical,

in which Private John Ball is David Jones and the former's physical and mental sufferings are the latter's, coupled with a strong literal rendering of place; religious, in which the "liturgical" time scheme of the poem beginning at Advent and moving through to Pentecost images the notion of preparation, birth into a new world, death and resurrection; and the third approach may be called aesthetic: the central consciousness of the poem, the artist, seeks for self-knowledge through suffering and trial, and is eventually "redeemed" by the powers of a Coleridgean imagination (watching the sea-beasts in "The Rime", the Queen of the Woods in In Parenthesis). Each reading of the poem is attractive and worthy, but what strikes the reader is that In Parenthesis, like "The Rime", is not just understood through one of these interpretations, but through all of them - and more.

In Parenthesis is, like "The Rime", about what it says it is: a tale, told with a degree of directness and physical detail, in Jones's case, of a group of soldiers and the Great War. But the directness of the prose-poetry has little to do with "realism": it is, on the contrary, as highly stylised as "The Rime", making use of a number of formal qualities which, as we have seen in the examination of Part One, are principally, but not wholly, linguistic. These contribute to the parenthetical nature of the experience, transforming it from one level of reality to another, and recalling the epigraph which Coleridge attached to his poems, not on the subject of sea voyages, but on the problems posed by the existence of

invisible spirits: "I can easily believe that there are more invisible than visible Beings in the Universe... For the human Mind always circles around these things, but never attains knowledge of them...".[90] The journey into the world of the "invisible Beings", the terra incognita about which the mind circles restlessly, is at the heart of the Mariner's experience, forming the main narrative structure of the ballad; similarly David Jones is preoccupied with mythical reality, metaphorically approached through the parenthetic nature of war, and also with the terra incognita of the artistic self, into which we are inevitably drawn.

My previous chapter on the Romantic re-creation of the sacramental symbol demonstrated the wholly new notion for the English Romantics of what language itself could do when put to work at maximum power and resource. Coleridge came to describe this heightened condition of language as the creation of symbols. In Chapter IX of the Biographia he explicitly examines the symbol as an extended form of meaning; even here, its value as a purveyor of truth is enigmatic:

> "An IDEA, in the highest sense of that word, cannot be conveyed, but by a symbol:...veracity does not consist in saying, but in the intention of communicating truth; and the philosopher who cannot utter the whole truth...is constrained to express himself mythically or equivocally."

David Jones's dominant method in In Parenthesis is symbolic: narrative reality is subsumed by it. The dual method implies a truth only equivocally understood and yet the sacramental symbolism of the poetry implies that some kind of reconciliation between the physical and metaphysical is possible. The terms of the reconciliation are elusive in In Parenthesis; the imposition of Christian meaning is attempted but fails at the conclusion of the poem, just as it does at the conclusion of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner".

The main narrative structure of Coleridge's poem and David Jones's prose-poem is built around the journey into a "terra incognita": this is the heart of the Mariner's and Private John Ball's experience. In the same way that the Mariner and his ship, having passed the equator in good weather, are driven far into the southern seas of ice and snow, so in Part One of David Jones's poem, as we have seen, the soldiers of the 15th Battalion - a similarly self-contained group of men - sail to unfamiliar territory. The shooting of the Albatross by the Mariner at the conclusion of the first part of Coleridge's ballad is the beginning of the poem's metamorphosis of meaning: up to this point all the metereological phenomena appear essentially natural. We know, too, that a rubicon has been passsed at the conclusion of Part One of In Parenthesis when David Jones ominously remarks: "you feel exposed and apprehensive in this new world", for both Mariner and soldier will encounter "unknown modes of Being" (in Wordsworth's phrase), already hinted at by the disintegration of a logical apprehension of reality.

Part Two of In Parenthesis deals with the preparation for battle, route marking and platoon drill, lectures on military tactics and hygiene: we are still very much in the factual world of manoeuvre and army policy. David Jones manages to suggest, however, by oblique reference to Coleridge, the nature of the world outside this experience. The barracks, like the Mariner's ship, are womb-like, protective, parenthetical: "They rested cosily at night in thick straw...; the tiny room...humane with the paraphernalia of any place of common gathering, warm within small walls". The same sense of familiarity and the need for security prompts Private Saunders, when incinerating the company's rubbish, to look with a wistfulness at the fields around him, reminiscent as they are of home: "the freely drawn rectangle of sodden green with its willow boundaries called familiarly to him". The urge to transform this scene, to image it in terms of another through the action of the imagination operates partially through David Jones's familiar conception of the scene as a window, rectangular and boundaried, and approaches the poet's central concern in the poem. What lies outside this parenthetical experience has "all the unknownness of something of immense realness, but of which you lack all true perceptual knowledge"; we are left with hints and guesses, articulated by David Jones in the lines:

"Roll on the Resurrection.
Send it down David.
Rend the middle air
Send it down boy". (p.18)

Since David Jones locates this part of the work in the "week before Christmas", the liturgical echoes of the Advent prose are apposite: besides the tongue-in-cheek irony of the poet in "Send it down David", the lines point towards the forth-coming apocalypse, trial and judgement and hoped-for redemption. We are also reminded of the "Dies Irae" in David Jones's words, "Send it down David", in which the prophet David joins with the Sibyl in forecasting the awful day of divine judgement, as well as Hopkins's bleak vision in "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves". The section is concluded with the terrifying violence of the soldiers' first experience of the destructiveness of war: "Out of the vortex, rifling the air it came...with all-filling screaming of the howling crescendo's up-piling snapt". Here the syntax buckles, re-enacting the dislocation of the physical landscape and the disintegration of the ordered reality perceived by John Ball: "...the pent violence released a consummation of all burstings-out; all sudden up-rendings and rivings-through - all taking-out of vents - all barrier-breaking - all unmaking. Pernitric begetting - the dissolving and splitting of solid things". The piling-up of present participles suggests the seeming endlessness of the momentary destruction, but it also indicates incompleteness: just as the sentence lacks finiteness and sense, so John Ball's world is rendered chaotic, unstructured, devoid of meaning by this act. At the very heart of this second section is, however, the experience which David Jones exploits

to counter this insistent "nowness".

The parenthetical experience of war is also, according to Jones, an abbreviated form of existence, a metaphor for life itself. Accordingly, the difficulty of knowing what lies outside this world of war is akin to our "lack of all true perceptual knowledge" of the unknown "immense realness" which transcends physical reality and the insistent present. The initial description of the area to which Private Ball and the others have been transported is of a waste land, but Jones's recurring image of the sky, over-arching and vast, puts the men and their activities into a different perspective. At first the image is ambiguous, even ironic: "The great flats, under the vacant sky, spread very far". We sense the emptiness and blankness of the landscape, its unresponsiveness to these new inhabitants; like actors, they people the scene momentarily, parenthetically, mimicking existence. "The great flats" with its theatrical "double entendre" implies a painted back-drop to this unreal stage; even the sky is "vacant", apparently devoid of relevance. We are at once reminded of the Mariner's situation: "As idle as a painted ship/Upon a painted ocean", and pointedly echoed in Jones's lines: "The sky maintained its clear serenity, no cloud sailed on its vastness at noon." But then at this still centre, both subject matter and style enact a transformation: Jones writes of John Ball: "his eyes looked (up) involuntarily, with his head's tilting. There spread before him on the blue warp above as though by a dexterous, rapid shuffling, unseen,

from the nether-side, a patterning of intense white; each separate bright breaking through, sudden and with deliberate placing - a slow spreading out, a loss of compact form, drifting into indeterminate mottling." Ball's gratuitous act is a response to the natural world, Hopkinsian in its intensity, and akin to Keats's "greeting of the spirit". The spirit responds to this beauty, the imagination transforming and recreating, in Jones's image from weaving, the purely physical, so that logical form and chronology break down: "a slow spreading out, a loss of compact form", even as the syntax parallels this in its dissolution. The fundamental importance of this is that we are given an intimation of a unity which exists below the discernible fragmentation of the torn landscape: in the "bright breaking through" of Ball's marvelling "at these foreign clouds", we see an interchange between mind and nature, which operates below the level of consciousness, and which is defined by the Coleridgean concept of "joy".

The essential "creatureliness" of things and man's response is of profound concern to Jones: the fragility of that epiphanic moment of joy is intensified by the evidence of the conclusion of Part Two of In Parenthesis. Here, set against the imaginative harmony of man and nature, is the de-racinated wilderness of the fighting zone: "A splintered tree scattered its winter limbs, spilled its life low on the ground". The personification emphasises the symbolic relationship, so that here and in the closing vegetable

images of the section " - a great many mangolds, uprooted, pulped, congealed with chemical earth... The sap of vegetables slobbered the spotless breach-block of No 3 gun" - the imminent death of the soldiers is imaged in terms of the natural world. Vegetable sap is blood, the men's limbs are the broken branches of the tree: the rational action of the unnatural chemical shells is antipathetic to a sacramental order which equates bread and wine with a man's body and blood.

Private Ball's reverie culminates in a simile which is resonant with meaning and anticipates the third section of the poem. Jones writes:

**"There seemed in the whole air above but from no sensible direction, or point, a strong droning, as if a million bees were hiving to the stars."**

Once again, the image is taken from the natural world, but used with a horrible irony: the reality is far more sinister. The sound seems to Private Ball as natural and reassuring as the drowsy hum of a hive, though magnified and comprehended as the noise of unnatural destruction, the simile takes on another accretion of meaning: these bees are like those referred to by Milton in Book I of "Paradise Lost", when, in an epic simile, he describes the noise of the fallen angels plotting and preparing to wage war against God:

"As bees
In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive..."

(11. 768-770)

The bees in David Jones's image are, however, "hiving to the stars" and the image thus anticipates the title and theme of the next section, "Starlight Order" and contains within it the real and problematic dualism of the poem, the worlds of nature and grace. The poet's method, narrative and mythic, is integrated to such an extent that we are entitled to expect the same of the content, but it seems as if Jones's deliberate experiment in form succeeds at the expense of its subject matter.

The dualism is problematic because it is precisely that: the two "rituals" of the poem, what can be termed the chthonic or vegetable and the Christian, are it seems to me not complementary, but antagonistic. They remain separate, despite David Jones's attempts to integrate them, and indeed, any attempt to propose the "starlight order" as one of the poles on which the poem turns is to impose a reading as artificial as Hopkins's forced emotion at the conclusion of "The Wreck". The triumphant unity of the poem as we have begun to see is in the correspondence between the "little world of man" and the great world of nature; this will form the climax of the poem, and it does so because of the terms

of the poem which David Jones imposes. The glimpses of that immense, unknowable, ultimate reality the world of grace, remain tentative feeling, rather than the mysterious certainty sought in the action of the Coleridgean Imagination; there seems to be a failure of nerve on Jones's part, or more precisely a lack of conviction in expressed transcendental belief. That is why we must see Jones, like Coleridge and Hopkins before him, engaged in a voyage and trial seeking for truth. Coleridge closes the Biographia in the language of the Romantic theologian, saying that the "object" and sole defence of his work is the reconciliation of transcendental with rational belief: the assertion that Christianity "though not discoverable by human reason, is yet in accordance with it." That reconciliation for David Jones will emerge in The Anathemata, but not in In Parenthesis.

In his notes to Part Three of In Parenthesis David Jones writes of Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner": "this poem was much in my mind during the writing of Part 3" - and, one could add, during the writing of the whole poem, for in Part 3 of David Jones's poem subject matter, language and imagery owe much to Coleridge's example. The central sections of "The Rime", III and IV, are concerned with the Mariner's demise and apparent redemption, the deaths of his crew and the ambiguous dominance of nature; the setting, with its extremes of heat and cold, light and dark, is dream-like with few points of logical or comprehensive reference; the abiding image is that of the moon:

"The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside - ".

Coleridge added prose lines which express a whole condition of spiritual exile; man as a part of nature, and yet cut off from what he alone can perceive as its divine joy: "In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival."

This theme of being "at home" in the human world, and "homeless" or alienated within nature comes to dominate the third part of Jones's poem, and summons up an accompanying body of natural imagery, the healing magical quality of the moon, fear-inducing darkness and the mystical nature of the stars. The loss of the sacramental relationship with nature, Coleridgean in origin, is made more explicit here, as is the experience of being lost and outcast, physically and metaphysically, in a waste land of "mauled earth".

The most noticeable aspect of the language of Part 3 of In Parenthesis is its inspissated texture: as John Ball

moves further into the fighting zone and more distant from recognisable, familiar territory, so the language and structure becomes remote from the syntax of prose, metaphors become more dense, language uninvertible. Broken voices, fragmented, unfinished commands dissolve around the central consciousness of John Ball and we are drawn more into his interior world of day dream and reverie. Jones allows language to disintegrate under the pressure of defining the unknown, just as the nerves of the "protagonists" give way in the unreal silence: the visitation of Life-in-Death to the Mariner is echoed in the omnipresence of corpses in the trenches along which Ball and the others stumble, "a bundle-thing", "once-bodies", "dung-making Holy Ghost temples". The mystery of this waste land is enhanced by the lack of colour; dream-like, the images of the section issue in stark black and white:

**"Cloud shielded her bright disc-rising yet her veiled influence illumined the texture of that place, her glistening on the saturated fields; bat-night-gloom intersilvered where she shone on the mist drift...".**

(p.27)

and the feeling of unreality is emphasised by the continuing use of stage imagery. The men are "stiff marionette jerking on the uneven path;... Wired dolls sideway inclining." As Jones remarks, "...you can only hear their stumbling off, across the dark proscenium".

In this section we become more aware of the dualisms of the poem as the division between prose and poetry widens: at moments of extreme pressure the language of In Parenthesis invariably modulates into poetry, as one critic has noted: "its uniform lines of prose breaking into the uneven lengths and peculiar rhythmic emphases of free verse, as though the heightening of perception consequent upon pain or fear or exaltation were felt to effect, as well as register, outward physical changes, not just expressing but dictating the contours of feeling."[91] These moments of intensity occur throughout the text, but become more numerous from this third section onwards:

"The rain stopped.
She drives swift and immaculate out over, free of these obscuring waters; frets their fringes splendid.
A silver hurrying to silver this waste
silver for bolt-shoulders
silver for butt-heel-irons
silver beams search the interstices, play for breech-blocks underneath the counterfeiting bower-sway; make believe a silver scar with drenched tree-wound; silver trace a festooned slack; faery-bright a filigree with gooseberries and picket-irons - grace this mauled earth -
transfigure our infirmity -
shine on us." (p.34-35)

Here Jones explores the magical healing nature of the moon, using the Coleridgean analogy; the symbol is drawn from the English pastoral tradition, but as in Coleridge's use, Jones refuses to limit it to any given meaning. Meaning plays around the central concepts of transfiguration and redemption, just as the moonlight metamorphoses the picket-irons and "heals" the wounds of the tree; further, the supplicatory final lines, liturgically cadenced, remind us that the moon is often used as an analogy for Mary. But the accretions of meaning revolve around a series of transfigurations, symbolised by the moon's actions and perceived by the imagination of the narrator-poet. This immanence of transfiguration pervades the poem, so that we are constantly made aware of "the immediate, the nowness, the presssure of sudden, modifying circumstance" which threatens our rational apprehension of physical reality and ushers us into a new order of being which is supra-rational and dependent upon the symbolizing power of the imagination working in conjunction with nature. The change effected means removal from what David Jones terms "wake-a-day" reality to dream reality: "There's no end to the metamorphoses of these dreams".[92] Coleridge originally sub-titled "The Rime", "A Poet's Reverie", and in the poem he uses dream to deepen our understanding of the descending levels of the action, so that we seem to move continually inward and downward. Similarly, David Jones sees the significance of the dream as a literary and psychological phenomenon. Structurally, the dream device in In Parenthesis allows us access to

a metaphysical reality which is paratactically opposed to waking reality: it provides, most importantly for David Jones, a means of integrating the apparently fragmented nature of experience, whether of war or of peace, into an order which, while opposing the chaos, comprehends it. Thus the syntactical sequences of In Parenthesis appear increasingly dream-like: one subject drifts into another, voices appear and disappear, without demonstrable logic or progression. The poem from its mid point becomes labyrinthine, enacting the confusion of the forward fighting zone and the dense, recessive thoughts of the men involved:

**"Half-minds, far away, divergent, own-thought thinking, tucked away unknown thoughts; feet following file friends, each his own thought-maze alone treading; intricate, twist about, own thoughts, all unknown thoughts, to the next so close following on."** (p.37)

We are drawn into the feelings of unease and claustrophobia, and down into the unconscious mind. For David Jones and Coleridge dreams are paths into the deep levels of that mind, transformation of reality, "charged" with meanings that might take years to reveal themselves on the mundane, conscious level. Further, the unconscious mind is, according to some psychological theory, in touch with primitive or ancestral thought forms and as such is understood to be the principal genesis of creativity.[93] It is a mode of reconciliation between time and eternity; for Coleridge, the mind, "unsophisticated by the will" has unfathomable power: the dream imagination,

like the artistic imagination, might somehow be capable of "enchanting" objects from out of their temporal sphere, as "for instance, the gravity in the sun and the moon" can hold sway over "the spring tides of our ocean".[94] The image is entirely relevant to that relationship between man, mind and nature which David Jones is seeking to establish.

David Blamires in his book David Jones: Artist and Writer records David Jones's comment that: "Wounded trees and wounded men are very much an abiding image in my mind as a hang-over from the war" and this fundamentally important remark helps to illumine the preoccupation in Part 3 of In Parenthesis and later with the redemptive qualities of nature, which in David Jones's work assume a theological intensity. A succession of images of nature perverted - "leper-trees, pitted, rownsepyked out of nature, cut off in their sap-rising" - culminates in John Ball on night sentry duty listening to the rats which will "redeem the time of our uncharity". Jones sets up an indeterminate tension between man and nature, indicating the intimacy of the relationship by reversing the accepted order of comparison; the barbed wire "like rained-on iron briary", and "a solitary star-shell rose, a day brightness illuminated them...". In other images the primitive chthonic relationship is brought to the fore: Ball watches "his mess-mates sleeping like long-barrow sleepers..."; the men "stir where they heap like sawn logs diversely let to lie", in a rehearsal of Arthurian myth.

The climactic point of Part 3, and indeed of central concern to the poem as a whole, is the stark descriptive passage which begins on page 53 with "And the deepened stillness as a calm, cast over us...": with these words we are drawn into Private Ball's - and by extension David Jones's - encounter with nature. Superficially, the passage works by contrasting the "uncharity" of war, which is destructive of both nature and human nature, with the redeeming action of the ubiquitous rats in their "amphibious paradise", and culminates in the realisation that all created life, human or animal, must die and "suffer with us this metamorphosis". Once again, usual expectation is deliberately reversed by David Jones: the rats, normally creatures which inspire revulsion and disgust, "rustle our corruptions"; the rodents are made one with the human "sappers" in the metaphor, "You can hear his carrying-parties rustle our corruptions...". And in an image which recalls the eucharistic intensity of the Mariner's "fear at my heart, as at a cup/My life-blood seemed to sip!", the rats observed by Ball "contest the choicest morsels... bead-eyed feast on us; by a rule of his nature, at night-feast on the broken of us". The Private's fears are countered, however, by the knowledge gained through this experience: corruption and mortality are redeemed by the "metamorphosis" all life undergoes. In a Hopkinsian insight, natural beauty is discerned as transient:

"Those broad-pinioned;
blue-burnished, or brinded-back;
whose proud eyes watched
the broken emblems
droop and drag dust,
suffer with us this metamorphosis." (p.54)

and yet Jones gives little indication of what this metamorphosis implies. Any idea of Christian resurrection is subsumed by, even lost to, the pervasive and insistent idea of the "one life": despite all the evidence to the contrary, Ball wins through to the realisation that man and nature can be unified: "Your body fits the crevice of the bay in the most comfortable fashion imaginable". If there is any redemptive notion here, then it is that Private Ball's, the Mariner's, our existential loneliness - "alone on a wide wide sea!" - can be given meaning by an act of the Imagination, a greeting of the spirit; and the separation of man from his environment instanced in destructive chemical warfare, can somehow be redeemed by the integrating action of grace operating through the mind of man. It is this that we see triumphantly enacted in the climax of Part 7.

Part 4 of In Parenthesis opens with day break and closes as "solitary star shells toss as the dark deepens". We move from the dark of Part 3 with its images of chaos, alienation and destruction to the dark battle which begins in Part 5: the brief "light" of Part 4 provides relief and

temporary respite. The title of Part 4, however, "King Pellam's Launde", reminds us that this is still the waste land, the time of trial and separation, disintegration and fragmented awareness; like the recessive symbolism which attaches itself to the primitive images of light and dark, however, this section continues to propose a polar way of seeing: over and against the superficial, rationally apprehended muddle of life in the trenches, a distinct and yet dependent reality is proffered, glimpsed momentarily by Ball, in the sacramental encounter with nature. That sense of "otherness", the chthonic myth, insinuates its way into the ordinariness of the events in Part 4: the "stand-to" and the sentry duty of Private Ball, so that the mundane is constantly open to the possibility of tranfiguration.

The section opens with an elaborate descriptive sequence as night yields to the increasing light of day. It is as if we escape for a time the dark inwardness of night and the recesses of self to emerge into the liveliness of mundane daily chores; colloquially cadenced voices assail the reader:

**"To peel back those eider-ducks me slumberin'**
**lovelies - Prince Charming presents his compliments..."**

and the poetry echoes the Hopkinsian notion that "Each day dies with sleep" in its oblique references to the morning as a type of resurrection:

"...the word of command...making rise again the
grey bundles where they lie.
Sodden night-bones vivify, wet bones live.
With unfathomed passion - this stark stir and waking."
(p.60)

Jones plays upon this Lazarus image a number of times in the opening pages of Part 4: night is conceived as being "unshrouded" by the early light; bodies are glimpsed as "bleached forms" which "emerge and stand". It is as if the men are rehearsing the outcome of the imminent offensive and, Stanley Spencer-like, will emerge, shrouded from their trench graves. But it seems to me that Jones is implying more here: "the brume holds, defiantly, and with winter confident, to shroud the low places" he writes; and elsewhere: "with the freshing day,/billowed damp more thickly hung yet whitened marvellously." The fog and mist cover men and the disfigured landscape in a protective embrace, metamorphosing, healing: "the opaque creeping into every crevice creeping, whitens - thick whitened, through-white, argent wall nebulous, took on, gave back, wholly reflected - till transfigured bright in each drenched dew particle...": David Jones assumes for nature a soteriological significance here, in anticipation of the Queen of the Woods episode in Part 7, and develops this notion quite explicitly on pages 65-68, when John Ball on Day Sentry duty gazes at Mametz Wood, the future place of immolation:

"His eyes turned again to where the wood thinned to
separate broken trees; to where great strippings-off hanged
from tenuous fibres swaying, whitened to decay - as swung
immolations
for the northern Cybele.
The hanged, the offerant:
himself to himself
on the tree." (p.67)

The poetry rises towards an oblique statement of Christian belief, that salvation will be forthcoming through the action of God in Christ, but again, Jones draws back: the imagery and its resonances are earthly: the only mystery to be celebrated is that of Eleusis: "keep date with the genius of the place - come with a weapon or effectual branch - and here this winter copse might well be special to Diana's Jack..."; the only ritual, the slaughter of "the young men reaped like green barley"; the only reward, "ein llyw olaf", an ivy crown.

Recalling the apocalyptic nature of Hopkins's "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves", the men realise that they are lost in a "wilderness, pent like lousy rodents all the day long: appointed scape-beasts come to the waste-lands, to grope; to stumble at the margin of familiar things - at the place of separation." This is a place of separation, not just in a judgemental sense between good and bad, black and white, but between reality and unreality, that which is familiar - the rations, "loose tea mingled with white sugar",

sacramentally issued, the warming brazier - and the unfamiliar: the mist encourages optical illusion, so that "To their eyes seeming a wood moving, a moving grove advisioned." The distinction is also to be made between innocence and knowledge, the loss of that Edenic state and the gaining of a grotesque Bosch-like landscape: "The untidied squalor of the loveless scene spread far horizontally, imaging unnamed discomfort, sordid and deprived as ill-kept hen-runs that back on sidings on wet weekdays where waste lands meets environs and punctured bins ooze canned-meats discarded, tyres to rot, derelict slow-weathered iron-ware disintegrates between factory-end and nettle-bed." The simile reminds us that the war is but a parenthetical stage setting for the general civilisational trend deplored by David Jones and symbolically realised by Hopkins in "Binsey Poplars" and "God's Grandeur":

**"All is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;**
**And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil**
**Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod."**

It is the recovery of that "deepest freshness deep down things" which so concerns David Jones in <u>In Parenthesis</u>, so that the epiphanic moments of sacramental encounter with "otherness" searingly break through the poem and re-unite man with nature - "The sky overhead looked crisp as eggshell, wide-domed of porcelain, that suddenly would fracture to innumerable stars" - and interestingly, that "moment" is imaged in eucharistic terms. Ball's reflection, as elsewhere,

is utterly spontaneous and like the Mariner's act of blessing, is utterly innocent. It is the proof of his true nature and yet it is as mysterious in its origins as the Mariner's response or as Hopkins's ecstatic - "Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies!" In the language of the theologian it is a sacramental encounter, an act of grace, apparently independent of the conscious human will yet in accord with the divine. The words of Paul Tillich, in The Shaking of the Foundations have some bearing here, where he says that sin is separation, and grace a re-uniting: "the reunion of life with life, the reconciliation of the self with itself. Grace is the acceptance of that which is rejected...". It is here that David Jones comes closest to some sort of Christian redemptive interpretation, particularly if we note the allusions to Easter Eve in the text: "The first star tremored: her fragile ray as borne on quivering exsultet-reed" and the soldiers, "shivering and wretched at the cock-crow", coupled with the issue of rations which become like the eucharistic host:

"Dispense salvation,
strictly apportion it,
let us taste and see,
let us be renewed,
for christ's sake let us be warm." (p.73)

But the poem returns to the dark and primitive; it would seem that the salvific approach of Christianity is but one

means of interpretation, one path to wholeness, in a poem which experimentally and tentatively explores many. We are left here, I think, with the words of Dai's boast,

"O Land! - O Bran lie under.
The chrism'd eye that watches the French-men
that wards under
that keeps us
that brings the furrow-fruit,
keep the land, keep us
keep the islands adjacent." (p.82)

with its identification of man with the earth and the boast's conclusion, which, half ironically, holds out no promise of resurrection:

"Old soljers never die they
Simply fade away." (p.84)

With the coming dark, "things seen precisely just now lost exactness...Your eyes begin to strain after escaping definitions." Entirely apposite, therefore, is the epigraph which introduces Part 5, "Squat Garlands for White Knights": the allusion to Carroll's "Through the Looking Glass" infers immersion in a dream reality, in which we, like Ball and the others, encounter "the inward abysm". (p.109).

The "levels" of reality in In Parenthesis as we have seen, are constantly metamorphosing, so that "wake-a-day" reality

is frequently transfigured and "made other" by the dissolving power of the imagination. Nowhere is this action more clear than in Part 5 when David Jones is describing "the man from Rotherhithe" sitting appropropriately in "Alice's" cafe:

> **"He looked straight-eyed and levelly; through bunched heads, through the Sacred Heart, done in wools, through the wall, through the Traffic Control notice, on the board, outside, opposite; through all barriers, making as though they are not, all things foreign and unloved; through all things other and separate; through all other things to where the mahogany cornices of 'The Paradise' - to the sawdust thinly spread...the turned spirals that support the frosted panes...Surrey Commercial stevedores calls drinks for the Reykjavik mate..."**
> (p.112/113)

We are drawn into the man's reverie and as his imagination recreates the scene in front of him, so the barriers separating perceived reality from a metaphysical order of being are dissolved; we are "through the looking glass" of "wake-a-day" reality in the foreign cafe and in the observer's local inn: associative perception disorders logical apprehension to set up an alternative ontology, which, time and again, reintegrates the fragmentation of war. That alternative order of being is mythic and holistic; it is also uninvertible and irreducible: "I can only say

there we have been: but I cannot say where. And I cannot say how long, for that is to place it in time".[95] For Jones that order can best be described as Edenic, for as the prose poem moves to its climactic point, the aggregation of references to pre- and post-lapsarian states becomes ever more insistent. It is as if David Jones needs to counter the thrust of the inevitability of the narrative with an equally vigorous stress upon what comprehends the awfulness of the imminent destructive action. The tensional balance between disorder and pattern must be held, so that a seemingly tongue-in-cheek line assumes a central importamce: the increasing violence "makes '79 Jones, in his far corner, rearrange and arrange again a pattern of match ends". (p.108). Sergeant Ryan, similarly, "watches from the open door the signs in the evening sky". The sign of that pattern underlying the narrative is the frequently modulated reference to a paradisal state, imaged also by T.S. Eliot: "Whisper of running streams, and winter lightning...",[96] in which man and nature are in perfect harmony. The Eden that Jones proposes in In Parenthesis is the culmination of the vegetable-organic myth, in which is subsumed the Christian notion of fallen man made whole, so that oblique references to the ritual cleansing of the soldiers before battle in the Divisional baths is a type of baptism into a potentially new life, just as we are subtly made aware of the men's impending inauguration into the mystery of death and regeneration by the poet's references to "apocalypse", to "Dai Davies and the Sibyl" (p.121) and "when you come from

this waste...you come into a green peace, and Gorre is that peace...you will remember it joyously". (p.116). It is highly appropriate, therefore, that the man from Rotherhithe should dream his way back to his native land and to a pub called "The Paradise".

The relationship between man and the natural elements is exploited by David Jones throughout the text, but the author's use of the pathetic fallacy is particularly ironic in Part 5: when man seeks rational control of nature and attempts to impose his mark, or in literary terms, when a writer arranges the elements to accord with the emotional climate of the text, then he, like Coleridge's Mariner, acknowledges the essential nature of that relationship, but perhaps misconstrues it. Jones's use of extreme elemental conditions in Part 5 from the "uniformly brazen sky", "the full beat down of the summer sun", under which the men are parched and sweltering, to the stormy "wildness of the night", the rain and the chill, deliberately echoes Coleridge's natural setting in Parts IV and V of "The Rime". In both cases, the protagonists are at odds with their environment; but Jones, like Coleridge, knows that redemption comes through the involuntary gratuitous greeting of the spirit, from within and not from without. It is indeed a fallacy that man can impose his will on that which ultimately controls him.

Thus it is that in the sacramental encounter with the Edenic state, man can regain some of that lost innocence and is redeemed from the "uncharity" of this world: the downland chalk "grass-tufts, too, were like they grow on seaward hills - with small wiry flowers against the white, and with the return of summer's proper way, after the two days storm, blue-winged butterflies, dance between flowery bank and your burnished fore-sight guard, star gayly Adam's dun gear." (p.131). Elsewhere, Adam(s) is the type of all mankind who seeks for that state which has been lost in this "space between", and which is momentarily glimpsed by John Ball amidst the ruination of the village, as the "officers in slacks walked the village street in the cool of the evening", the latter phrase consciously evoking the Biblical and Miltonic description of Eden.

Ball comes across the village priest, walking "between his vegetable beds", missal in hand, surrounded by his beanstalks and bee-hives, and we sense through Ball's chance encounter, a "habitation, a folk-life here, a people, a culture already developed, already venerable and rooted". (p.49). The final verb emphasises the sense of belonging and homeliness, rare in this deracinated landscape full of lost, alienated men. The priest, in the quasi-monastic setting, is at one with the natural world: like Wordsworth's Leech-Gatherer he is almost a force of nature: "he turned between where the bees lived, between low plants, to his presbytery", and Ball's unexpected meeting with the priest is akin to that of Wordsworth with

the old man. Ball draws an oblique moral support from the priest who "seemed to speak to the turned leaves, and to get his answer": in "an old man's mumbling" he recites his office, and his "canonical wiseness conserved...the validity of material things, and the resurrection of this flesh." (p.118). The priest, like the Leech Gatherer, is somehow in touch with the primitive sources of life, and is conscious of the reconciliatory nature of Coleridge's "one life", so much so that personality becomes indistinct in the merging of human, animal and vegetable. Hence in Part 6, "death's sure meeting place" is "this hollow between the hills" (p.131), and Jones emphasises the closeness of men and the natural world: "Private Saunders lay like a hare's form...on the open down"; John Ball "looked intently into the eye of a buttercup", "And the Lewis gunner...with stretched out arm still lying on his stomach turned his left cheek to the wiry downland grass...". (p.143). We are made aware that "across the evening, homing birds of the air with nests cawed on high above them..." (p.146), as the poem inexorably establishes the order to which the men will be assimilated.

The conclusion of Part 6, although anticipatory of the opening of The Anathemata, poses one of the ambiguities of In Parenthesis: here before the final advance and offensive, Ball discovers "the broken village on the hill" with its ruined chapel, "blasted bare". The scene, with the "civvy dead... churned and shockt from rest all out-harrowed...", has been interpreted as symbolic of the crisis of civilisation, and

indicative of the arbitrary destruction of war. But we need to look more closely at what David Jones is saying here, because his use of irony and the imagery itself suggest that this observation of Ball's, placed as it is before the final onslaught, is symptomatic of a deeper malaise within the poet himself.

If, as I have said earlier, the poem suffers from a failure of conviction on the part of Jones, then this section provides confirmation of that. Jones employs the metaphor of war to comprehend the disintegration of the civilisational situation as he sees it and his avowed formal experimentalism allows him to discern an alternative reality into which the chaos of war is ultimately reconciled. But that reality is only partially realised in In Parenthesis, since, despite the too convenient liturgical analogies, David Jones's sacramental vision finally encompasses man and nature, but not man, nature and God. The very metaphor chosen seems to preclude David Jones from advancing upon this position; like T.S. Eliot in his version of the Malorian waste land, he glimpses that which would render the waste land sensible, but not the complete pattern. The love of man for man, the soldiers' companionship and their instinctive embrace of the creaturely earth is an approach to that spiritual love which passes all understanding. But like T.S. Eliot also, David Jones will discover that the chthonic myth stultifies that ultimate apprehension of love: we are left with "the empty chapel, only the wind's home". The sacramental vision is impeded,

as it is in Hopkins's "The Wreck", by the poet's chosen objective correlative; by a preoccupation with experimental form and method at the expense of meaning, and by an inchoate and insecure religious faith as yet untranslated into Newmanesque belief.

Jones employs harsh irony in his juxtaposition of the picture of the fragmented empty chapel - "apse bared" - and the mangled dead, both civilian and military, with the "old women in Bavaria" who are "busy with their novenas", in case "dead Karl might not come home". The words of the "Salve Regina" - "O clemens, O pia..." - mock the reality of this vileness: "For these shovelled just into surface soil like a dog". Momentarily we feel the acute indignation of the poet and the note of protest at the futility of the Christian response to such senseless waste. The bodies have indeed achieved a sort of resurrection, so that the words of the Catholic Requiem Mass, "Libera nos" take on a sardonically ironic meaning in Jones's placing of them. This perhaps explains the epigraph to Part 7, "The Five Unmistakable Marks" which, at first sight, appears to allude to the stigmata of Christ and thus by analogy the soldiers' "crucifixion", but on closer examination, we find that David Jones is referring to Carroll's "Hunting of the Snark", a mock-heroic nonsense poem. The effect is to undermine the Christian significance, or at least to show that such a response is inadequate, even inappropriate, to the needs of the situation. In Part 7 David Jones displays an anger as potent as that of Wilfred Owen

with regard to the official Christian response:

> **"Give them glass eyes to see**
> **and synthetic spare parts to walk in the Triumphs...and**
> **O, O, O, its a lovely war with poppies on the up-platform**
> **for a perpetual memorial of his body".** (p.176)

But the dominant tone in this final section is not of shrill anger, or triumph, rather it is elegaic and reconciliatory, despite the superficial violence and disjunction of the men's experience. Jones's most important discovery is that meaning is not to be garnered from hollow form, Christian or otherwise, but from an inner assent satisfactorily resolved into "a creed in the reason".

If, like Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", In Parenthesis is a poem which enacts a "rite de passage", then we must recognise in the tripartite movement of the poem the final journey back or home. "Home" is that Edenic state from which man has been alienated and to which he would return after this parenthetical existence: that same reality which is glimpsed by Private Ball and others at moments of duress when sensory awareness is heightened to an almost unbearable pitch and the mind is opened to the influence of supra-rational experience. The imagination comes alive to the immanence of "transfigurations", the failure of absolutes, the deceptions of the senses:

"Long side by side lie like friends lie
on daisy-down on warm days
cuddled close down kindly close with the mole..." (p.157)

That journey home involves expiation and immolation, the transfiguration of self into a new order of being and ultimate redemption of the chaos of this world into meaning and pattern. By phrasing the ideological scheme of this final section thus, the proximity to the Christian pattern becomes obvious, yet the poem resists the imposition of any such doctrine. The whole dualism of the poem in the reference to the sun and the moon, the state of solitude and the state of "goodly company", the nightmare reality of war and the salvific power of nature, suggests that some kind of redemption or reconcilation is possible. Yet the poem - or the poet - obstinately refuses to subscribe to a Christian meaning or value, and we are left ultimately with a vacuum at the heart of the poem. The initial act of assent, to adapt Coulson, remains indeterminate and tentative and unresolved conceptually.

The grim reality of the final offensive is realised in Part 7 where, at the place of "everlasting partition", separation seems to be inevitable; the separation of man from man, the severing of the familiar bonds of love and friendship, and the separation of man from his environment in the destructive chaos of war: "and June shoots lopt/and fresh stalks bled...". The apocalyptic nature of this

"final judgement" is imaged by David Jones in the offensive on Mametz Wood, in which the "airy world gone crazed" disintegrates around both human and animal: "foxes flee... and birds complain in flight - for their nests fall like stars..." and in an image which suggests the destruction of the mythic world by the new rationality, "unicorns break cover". The language, like the action, is disjunctive and crazed. At the heart of the action "under the green tree" are the men, types of fallen Adam, each of whom "had awareness of his dismembering, and deep-bowelled damage; for whom the green tree bore scarlet memorial, and herb and arborage waste". (p.162). The damage is indeed profound: the age-old sin, the original evil, which cost man Paradise is re-enacted in this dismembering of nature and wilful separation of man from his Creator.

Within the fabric of the text, however, we discover the possibility of redemption. In the polar movement of fragmentation and wholeness we discern the process of assimilation beginning: "A whole unlovely order this night would transubstantiate..."; the sacramental ordering, the making other, of the unholy scene climaxes in the Queen of the Woods episode, but allusion is made to the immanence of metamorphosis in, for example, "dew asperges the freshly dead", and "remembrance of the harvesting/of the renascent cycle/and return...". (p.174). A series of images, running counter to the omnipresence of death, posits nature not just as redeemer of the holocaust but also paradoxically as giving life:

"...Private Ball pressed his body to the earth and the white chalk womb to mother him..." (p.154)

As the imminence of death increases, so the individuality of the men becomes blurred and their oneness with the diurnal cycle of light and dark, birth and death,is asserted:

"...the earth where your body presses seems itself to pulse deep down with your heart's acceleration..." (p.167)

In a Hopkinsian notion, David Jones lifts up "so many without memento/beneath the tumuli on the high hills/and under the harvest places" (p.163) recalling "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and the seeming contradiction of the shipwreck as a harvest for God. The men will fructify the land and achieve a type of resurrection.

The two orders of reality meet in the climactic setting and symbol of the dark wood. This is the "meeting place" hinted at in the epigraph of the final section and the symbol reconciles the seemingly opposing spheres of physical and metaphysical whilst retaining the mysterious complexity associated with metaphorical statement. Mametz Wood is made tangibly real: we feel and smell the "draggled bloodwort" and "the late-flowering dog-rose spray"; the fear and pain of the men is made physically present; we hear the "dark convulsed cacophony" of the guns. But even as we grope towards these absolutes, like the men themselves: "solid things dissolve,

and vapours ape substantiality". ( p.179). The wood is a place of vision, maze-like and labyrinthine, in which the men "come as sleep-walkers whose bodies go unbidden of the mind". It is impossible "to distinguish men from walking trees" and it is here that Ball discovers "in the very core and navel of the wood there seemed a vacuum, if you stayed quite still, as though you'd come on ancient stillnesses in his most interior place". (p.181). What Ball approaches in this moment of significant encounter is the reconcilatory "still point of the turning world", and like Eliot's persona in "The Waste Land", all physical senses are ordered towards the comprehension of this mystery, but ultimately we are left with a vacuum, "looking into the heart of light, the silence". And it would seem that Private Ball's dilemma is that of David Jones in In Parenthesis: the symbol is temporarily evacuated of meaning, its ultimate sanction denied by the author's own spiritual uncertainty in "his most interior place" - the dark wood of the self. What is encountered is, indeed, mystery; it is not, however, the mysterious certainty which Hopkins designated as sacramental truth; rather, it is the mystery of the imagination, which like the action of the Queen of the Woods, works upon the material of the universe, moulding, forming and shaping, in a gratuitous act of love. The working of the human spirit is imaged in the reconciliatory ritual act of Coleridgean import, paratactically expressed: "Among this July noblesse she is mindful of December wood...". (p.186). And clearly what Jones wants us to see, as elsewhere in In Parenthesis, is that the ritual act, that is to say

the sacramental act, the act that involves analogically at least, an effective sign, is a pre-figuring of the supreme act of gratuitous love which ensures eternal life. But here Jones encounters precisely that problem which Hopkins faced at the conclusion of "The Wreck": the allegorical correlative obtrudes between the poet and his experience.

"The Wreck of the Deutschland" takes as its overall shape or schema an historical fact: the shipwreck and death by drowning of, amongst others, a group of exiled nuns, and Hopkins seeks to use that objective correlative as a vehicle to express his own response to the sacramental mystery of Christianity, the myth of God incarnate. In so doing, we see the poetry being ordered towards the apprehension of a doctrine of design in the universe and the expression of an eschatological view that, with the destruction and renewal of the world, the eternal reign of Christ will be fulfilled. Hopkins attempts a Coleridgean fusion of particular and universal, but the conclusion, as we have seen, artificially separates the myth or truth from the vehicle of its expression. In Parenthesis must be accounted the same. In Parenthesis is representational in that it describes things seen, and despite David Jones's disavowal of historical accuracy,[97] has been shown by Colin Hughes to be firmly rooted in fact.[98] It is also mythical in so far as what is seen or remembered reminds the artist of the myth of the Malorian waste land, or the John Barleycorn complex, or the Old Testament, or the Roman liturgy, but in the later work of Jones, notably The Anathemata, the matter blended into the myth is

drawn from the poet's imagination and not superimposed and left unresolved, as it is in In Parenthesis. If we use the word "myth" to include the creation of sacramental symbol as a means of exploring real, factual, truth, then it seems to me that in In Parenthesis Jones is using and experimenting with inherited myth, just as Hopkins does in an allegorical fashion in "The Wreck", but not creating myth, as Hopkins went on to do in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" and as Jones does in The Anathemata, through a religiously-determined preference for symbol and as an example of what Coulson calls "the difficult resolution" of faith into belief.

The myth which dominates the conclusion of In Parenthesis and, indeed, permeates the whole work, is that of Adonis and the mythology of seasonal fertility cults derived from the mysteries of Eleusis and the ancient Orphic religion. Jones would have been very much aware of the story of the death of the beautiful young hunter of Greek legend from his reading in Sir James Frazer's The Golden Bough and from Shelley's "Adonais": just like Shelley, Jones builds on the ancient ritual a complex formal structure of legend, personal feeling and literary reference, the vehicle serving Jones as an appropriate expression of grief and expiation for "the many men so beautiful" lost in Mametz Wood. Jones's Queen of the Woods is Shelley's Uranian Venus, the maternal figure who transforms the "leprous corpse" with "flowers of gentle breath"; the violets and evergreen plants of the wreaths given by the Queen of the Woods to the men suggest the

symbolism of the ancient mysteries and the rituals of death give way to the muted joy of the conclusion of Jones's poem. Like Shelley's Adonais, and in keeping with the re-birth myth of Adonis, Jones's men are "made one with Nature", for as Plato remarks in the Phaedo: "whoever shall arrive in Hades unexpiated and uninitiated shall lie in mud, but he that arrives there purified and initiated shall dwell with the gods. 'For there are', say those who preside at the mysteries, "many wand-bearers, but few inspired.'"

Rene Hague has written that "it was impossible for David to mythologise the events on the Western Front because his work was too strictly historical...and too recent".[99] Various critics such as Thomas Dilworth and Jeremy Hooker, however, persist in making extravagant claims for In Parenthesis: Jones's "sacramental sensibility is especially evident in the relationship between the shape of In Parenthesis and the patterns of liturgical worship and the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent" writes Dilworth,[100] and Hooker avers that the soldiers of In Parenthesis are "like Christ...The Victim who is also the victor, the sacrifice which is also redemption...". Jones has made his feelings on the subject well known: "I don't like his identification of the grimly circumstances and maims... with the Passion of the Incarnate Logos..."; he writes in this case of Wilfred Owen, who in a letter, speaks of training new drafts in terms of preparing Christ for his Passion, but the general criticism is clear. In seeking to impose such a specific theological schema on the poem such critics deny the

experimental breadth of form of the poem and also miss what seems to me the essential point: the central element of the true myth, sacramentally realised, is lacking - "the treasure never eyesight got, nor was ever guessed what for the hearing" - that is, the revelation of mystery, and for that we must look not to In Parenthesis, but to The Anathemata.

In Parenthesis, despite its imperfections and ultimate failure of vision, does however demonstrate the ground of Jones's poetic and shows him to be working within the sacramental tradition and developing it. The exploration of extreme emotion, although recollected in tranquillity by Jones, leads him to express himself analogically: "...I fairly continuously use language and empty analogies and allusions inseparable from the Christian tradition of the West..." [102] and to discover in sacramental symbol and myth an imaginative intensity which answers to the emotional demands of the poet's material. Through these symbols and metaphors an order is imposed upon experience, or more exactly an underlying order is elicited, and because of this, in the deepest sense, the poet becomes truly a maker or creator in the Coleridgean tradition. In In Parenthesis we see an order being imposed: "...the form is mechanic when on any given material we impress a pre-determined form, not necessarily arising out of the properties of the material..." [102], but in The Anathemata we discover "the organic form... (which) shapes as it develops itself from within, and the

fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form".[103] A myth in its original sense of a sacred story containing a hidden truth, is not something constructed, but given, and we find Jones following the school of Frazer and his interpretation of myth in In Parenthesis, emphasising the function of myth and ritual in making man at one with his environment, particularly the recurring cycle of vegetative growth and decay. But psychologists such as Freud, and before him philosophers such as Coleridge, have shown that the language of myth is also the language of dream, and that it has a function in relating man's limited rational ego to perhaps much vaster subliminal realities within him. More recently anthropologists such as Levi-Strauss have lighted upon the social functions of myth in purporting to explain the institutions and the ethos of communities. Each of these functions has its relevance to the task of Jones, particulary in In Parenthesis, because essentially myth is a means of exploring human potentiality. Finally, if perhaps we sense in In Parenthesis a tendency to mechanical, because deliberately experimental, form, then within the suffering of the men in the trenches (and by implication in the suffering of the poet) we see a balancing inner imperative. Like the Mariner, the poet's experiences and vatic role, while making him an "outcast" from society have also given him a permanent role and duty within the human community. In this sense David Jones looks forward to The Anathemata in which the Mass analogy will be more satisfyingly realised, but in In Parenthesis he is already

the priest or "cult-man", referred to in The Anathemata, "making this thing other" offering the "groping syntax" of the poem as the priest lifts up "an efficacious sign"; priest and poet are making that which is significant, the sign of something other and greater, and thus the poetic act is of the same nature as the transubstantiation effected in the Mass. To make other people share everything the poet has undergone and learned through personal suffering and observation of suffering in others re-enacts the supreme man-priest, Christ. The poet's tale, like the Mariner's, is to teach, by a constantly repeated act of the imagination in the reader; and in this sacramental encounter we sense, however obliquely, "love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth".[104] As Jones resoundingly claims at the conclusion of In Parenthesis:

"The geste says this and the man who was on the field...
and who wrote the book...the man who does not know this
has not understood anything."

## "The Anathemata": "...the region of the summer stars"

The first draft of In Parenthesis was completed on 18th August 1932, and the finished poem published in 1937; the intervening five years were for Jones a difficult period, artistically and personally, in which we can observe the confirmation of an aesthetic already partially formulated.

Illness, in particular nervous strain, plagued him and was to afflict him with varying degrees of severity for the rest of his life, so much so that after the summer of 1932 in which he painted some sixty water-colours, painting ceased to be of primary importance and more and more of his energies were spent in writing. It is as if this breakdown caused him to rely less upon the observed motifs of an increasingly alien physical present and to dwell more upon memory in both visual and literary art. There is no real change in the direction of his work, but there is a clear technical development after what can be termed the "break" of 1933. It is a progression from a lyrical to an epical form such as James Joyce describes in Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man:

> **"The lyrical form is in fact the simplest verbal vesture of an instant of emotion, a rhythmical cry such as ages ago cheered on the man who pulled at the oar or dragged stones up a slope... The simplest epical form is seen emerging out of lyrical literature when the artist prolongs and broods upon himself as the centre of an epical event and this form progresses till the centre of emotional gravity is equidistant from the artist himself and from others. The narrative is no longer purely personal, the personality of the artist passes into the narration itself, flowing round and round the persons and the action like a vital sea".**[105]

During the writing of In Parenthesis David Jones brooded upon himself as the centre of an epical event, but not until The Anathemata do we discern the complete transition from

one form to another: the vestiges of lyricism are very much present in the former, hardly at all in the latter, but it is in David Jones's art that we see this transition enacted, almost as a rehearsal for the mature literary technique of The Anathemata.

After an interval when nervous illness prevented him from working, in 1936-7 David Jones made several drawings for In Parenthesis, of which two were published as frontispiece and tailpiece. The delicate, lyrical medium of the earlier water-colour is abandoned in favour of a vehicle which could carry the great weight of meaning which David Jones felt he must include: thus the drawings for In Parenthesis were the first of a series of densely packed, figurative sketches in which Jones tried to give bodily form to his sense of the continual presence of Divine Grace through all history. It is in these drawings, rather than in the text itself, that Jones satisfactorily achieves his aims. The art critic Paul Hills has commented: "Since each drawing, under a variety of bodily 'accidents' shows forth the same eternal mystery, the meaning of each is illuminated by turning back and forth from one to another",[106] and thus we experience identity persisting through difference, which is the cumulative effect of a reading of The Anathemata. Hills goes on to aver that "the major figurative images of 1937 to circa 1950 (the period in which David Jones was working on The Anathemata)[107] celebrate the Incarnation of Christ and His redemption of the world through his sacrifice on Calvary and his institution of the Eucharist,

whereby that sacrifice is perpetually renewed."[108] These drawings unify the historic past with the historic present in a way which deliberately echoes the action of the Catholic Mass, and they successfully hold in paratactic tension the differing "levels" of reality contained in the symbol of the sacral victim, the observed and the imaginative.[109]

The major drawing of the Second World War, "Aphrodite in Aulis" (1941) again contributes to our understanding of Jones's literary technique in The Anathemata and provides a context for that work. The drawing is complex, and densely recessive, depending for its effect upon a series of associated symbols which cause our perception to alter continually, but the basic pictorial format is that of a Crucifixion, with a British soldier on the left of the goddess bearing the spear of Longinus and a German on the right, the latter identified by the Roman insignia of the fascist. Both are united in their love of the goddess, who, like Christ on the Cross, is the object of worship and the victim of sacrifice. She is chained to the altar, part living flesh with radiant stigmata, part statue cracked like marble. The play of such surrealistic metamorphoses of flesh into marble and vice versa, although echoing the classical precedent of the caryatids of the Erechtheum in Athens, is also part of Jones's "shape-shifting technique", where it is impossible to define exactly the mystery of being, nor should we try. The necessary theological link between the institution of the Eucharist and the Passion of Christ, which Jones at this time was increasingly

emphasising, is expressed in bodily image by the juxtaposition of the relief of the Agnus Dei that bleeds into a chalice below the figure of the goddess. A Mass is in progress which is made plain by the vested priest who censes the altar. The astonishing paradoxes of the drawing and its universal symbolism demand of the reader a great deal: we are drawn into this encounter with the artist and in so doing we enter into his rehearsal of those Christian myths, the revivification of which ensures the continuance of that tradition realised by Hopkins in his poem "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire...". Jones is not simply using myth here: he is creating it.

The final literary allusions in In Parenthesis are those Biblical quotations which act as post-scripts to the text itself, and one of these points to a major concern of Jones's later life and art: "This is my beloved and this is my friend". The quotation from the "Song of Songs" encompasses that "greater love" of the all-male world of the trenches, into which Jones was abruptly catapulted from the life-class at the Camberwell School of Art, but it reaches out to include the idealised love Jones felt for the Virgin Mary, afforded pre-eminence in the Catholic tradition which he embraced so soon after the First World War. She became his essential mediatrix and protectress: all his drawings of archetypal women, such as the Aphrodite discussed above, or Guinevere in Arthurian myth, or Flora - all were variants of her litany. David Jones's idealised love of the female protectress figure is, in its way, but a variant of the self-less act of love celebrated in the

final section of The Anathemata -

"(Nine nights on the windy tree?
Himself to himself?
Who made the runes would read them -
wounded with our spears.)" (p.225)

- and everywhere present in The Anathemata. The redemption of the waste land of In Parenthesis, and by extension the parenthetical waste land of man's existence between the Fall and the looked-for resurrection, is brought about by an act of love, but the note of conviction in In Parenthesis is lacking: the assent seems not yet to be translated into belief, and we must look to The Anathemata for a vision of the world recomposed, a vision of love triumphing in a desperate struggle against cultural decay and the poet's personal sense of disintegration. That vision is grounded in the poet's understanding of the sacrifice of the Mass.

Jones's illustrations of Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" no doubt sharpened the poet's awareness of the relationship between form and meaning. He recognised that the surface simplicity of Coleridge's ballad-form concealed or disclosed deeps and strata of meaning and Jones's illustrations, as well as the literary work in hand, In Parenthesis, uncovered deeps and strata of meaning in a world of signs.

By engraving the Albatross impaled by the Mariner's arrow to the cross-bar of the mast, he likens the shooting of the immaculate bird to the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. In these early illustrations and the working out of the implications of such symbolic thought in In Parenthesis, we see the convergence of ideas which was to lead Jones to the full sacramental sensibility of The Anathemata. The fragmentation of perception discerned in Coleridge's ballad and re-created in David Jones's illustrations is characteristic of David Jones's highest ideal, the "symbol-producing" mind or culture, and is indicative of, even dramatises, the paradoxical awareness of the incompleteness and wholeness of our existence which is the distinguishing mark of poets working within the sacramental tradition. So that if experience is one of separation and sundering, the role of the poet is to rejoin those original elements in the symbol which, by definition, implies a putting together of something torn apart, and is itself a fragment, a "living part of the whole it enunciates". In the symbol, as we have seen in Hopkins, there is always some revelation and embodiment of the infinite, so that a common structure may be said to obtain between the symbolic and the sublime.

Thus, it is fitting that Jones should find his dwelling place as poet and artist in the Mass, since the Catholic Church as he has frequently remarked looking back to Aquinas, commits its adherents to the bodily image. The symbol which Jones

explores most fully in The Anathemata is the image of the Church as the ship, the Barque of Christ; in its timbers, alluding not just to the Mariner's ship, but also to Hopkins's "Deutschland", Jones perceives the salvific wood of Christ's Cross. A lifetime of meditation upon this image culminates in The Anathemata in his understanding of the Christian theology of Redemption and its central mystery, the re-enactment of Christ's Passion in the sacrifice of the Mass. The ordering of elective and affective wills in Jones's later poem gives authentication to an assent only partially understood at the time of writing In Parenthesis:

**"What is pleaded in the Mass is precisely the argosy or voyage of the Redeemer, his entire sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension. It is this that is offered on behalf of us argonauts and the whole argosy of mankind and indeed in some sense of all earthly creation, which, as St Paul says, suffers a common travail."**[110]

So we are comprehended within this imagery as the voyage is a metaphor for the journey of the soul, and we make this discovery not through an imposed allegorical schema or correlative metaphor as in In Parenthesis, but through an imaginative act of perception which allows us to see in The Anathemata a hidden meaning akin to the apprehension of resurrection in Hopkins's "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire...".

The two large drawings completed by David Jones in the period 1935-1940, "Guenever" and "The Four Queens" again return to the symbolism of the Mass: in the former, the love of Launcelot and Guenever is analogous to that of Christ for his bride, the Church. The bed of Guenever is, figuratively, an altar and the reservation of the sacrament in the tabernacle on the altar in the background alludes to the perpetual renewal of Christ's union with His Church in the Eucharist. Once again the imagery of the Passion is linked to that of the Mass by depicting Launcelot wounded with the stigmata. Rene Hague has remarked that in Jones's manufacturing of myth three things are contained: "imagination, explanation and mental satisfaction".[111] The mental satisfaction of such a drawing is that it elevates Arthurian myth to the level of Christian mystery by the inclusiveness of the central subject - the Mass, for as Jones's friend Saunders Lewis said, the Mass "makes sense of everything". The explanatory or didactic nature of the Launcelot and Guenever myth is to be understood in David Jones's admiration for the traditional story which is "straight, exact, rational and true", where, as Hague says, "rational" means not "logical" but "'rationabilis' in the sense in which that word is applied to the oblation at the sacrifice of the Mass".[112] The imagination, finally, is concerned with the most fundamental element in David Jones's myth, the working of the human spirit upon the material provided by the universe, in such a way as to produce that which is made, an artefact, not a mere fiction. The Coleridgean echoes are more than clear in David Jones's recapitulation of the incarnational role of the artist. For

David Jones, myth is truth expressed in artefacture, and what was in pre-Christian times "mere" myth becomes in a new dispensation the revelation of Christian mystery.[113] This is central to our understanding of The Anathemata.

The new complexity of the figurative drawings of the late thirties and forties demonstrates both the positive and negative aspects of the literary technique evolved in The Anathemata. The drawings reflect the ever-changing nuances of meaning which David Jones's imagination began to uncover in his subject matter, and in a work such as "Guenever" the dangers of this protean approach can be seen: coherence of design and clarity of meaning can be abandoned when detail dominates. As Jones's perception of his subject deepens, the ramifications of the artistic subject are often developed in the drawing itself; the work takes on the nature of a palimpsest, as Hills explains:

> **"...as the drawing progressed certain details were strengthened with pencil or ink, or freckled with drily brushed watercolour or chalk or crayon, while other details were rubbed over, softened as though blurred by atmosphere."**[114]

The net result in a drawing like "Guenever", or in the lines of The Anathemata, is an image which transmits sensations of light, air and wind, yet its constantly shifting focus offers an equivalent to the mind's changing perception of its multiplicity of signs; in short, the application of Coleridge's advice to the poet, "to hover between images".

The great series of drawings of flowers in a glass chalice made between 1949 and the mid 1950s culminates in "Flora in Calix-light" of 1950. The drawing is of two-fold relevance to our understanding of the form and content of the literary work in hand: first, Jones writes in a letter of 1943, "I've only just tumbled to the simple scientific fact that 'water' is the womb of all life - and of the simplest organisms - well that thrilled me no end - no wonder baptism is by water...".[115] Through the glass of the chalice we see water, the element which first harboured life and without which there can be no seed, and the element which dominates the imagery of The Anathemata. In The Anathemata the resonances of meaning attached by David Jones to baptism are endless, not least of which is the poet's statement of the Christian mythos which makes use of the myths of other ages not, as In Parenthesis merely by allusion, but by an incorporation that we may see as a type of baptism. Secondly, the "Calix-light" of Jones's title is also the light of the Christmas Preface, part of which he inscribed as an illustration to The Anathemata:

**"Quia per incarnati Verbi mysterium, nora mentis nostrae oculis lux uae claritatis infisbit: ut dum visibiliter Deum cognoscimus, per hunc in invisibilium amorem rapiamur." ("For through the mystery of the Word made flesh the new light of thy brightness has shone upon the eyes of our mind, so that as we see God in visible form, we are through him caught up into love of things invisible".)**

The chalice drawings are a perfect example of the Thomist belief that the universal shines forth from the particular; through visible forms we are caught up into the love of things invisible. De la Taille uses the same concept in his The Mystery of Faith and Human Opinion Contrasted and Defined, where he is speaking of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist:

> "It is substantially present here in the place of the bread; and yet, real and substantially present though it be, it is a figure, it is in its very reality a symbol; itself the Body of Christ, a sign and a sacrament of what, if you please? Of what can it be the sacrament and the sign?"... "That he himself should serve to figure something else, he the Lord of glory, the ultimate goal and term of everything - that is unbelievable."[116]

De la Taille goes on to aver that we are not separated from Christ but united to Him:

> "He placed himself in the order of signs, in the order of symbols, to have the joy of symbolising, and by symbolising it, of building up the mystical Body of which we are members. The Body formed in the womb of the Virgin Mary and carried upon the Cross, the Body glorified in the heavens is in the Eucharist the sacrament of that mystical Body which is made up of Christ and of us."[117]

The whole of The Anathemata is coloured by this all-embracing concept which shapes the text and out of which the work grows. It is in marked contrast to the evolution of In Parenthesis in which David Jones declared, "my method is merely to arse around with such words as are available to me until the passage in question takes on something of the shape I think it requires and evokes the image I want".[118] It is precisely because the later work is not avowedly a "shape in words", the shape given by the allegorical realisation of war, but a myth in which form and meaning are indissolubly knit that The Anathemata works so successfully.

We can see, then, that in The Anathemata word and image, experience and expression are conjoined dialectically, and in that tension, David Jones finds the creativity necessary to reaffirm the abiding truths of Christianity, but before examining the text in some detail, two general and inter-related observations concerning form and content need to be made.

The lyricism of the early watercolours is won against all the odds; the later drawings, writings and inscriptions are fragments shored against the poet's ruin. The difficulties derive from several quarters: a naturally sensitive and nervous temperament had been frayed and shocked by the appalling conditioning experience of the trenches; the reductionist utilitarianism of the modern world - the world of technics - seemed irreconcilably at odds with the sacramental vision of the poet's faith; Eric Gill's daughter, Petra, to

whom David Jones had been engaged, decided to marry another of David's acquaintances. As Philip Hagreen has remarked, "denied the vision of hope he could only see what lay behind - the smouldering ruins of man's history and a litter of broken things".[119] Though David Jones constantly looked back over man's history, nowhere more so than in The Anathemata, he was always grappling with the problem of giving his works what he termed "nowness". This modernity is best described by T.S. Eliot as the poet's perception "not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence", and "a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and temporal together...".[120] The tensional pull between historicity and nowness which marks both In Parenthesis and The Anathemata is one of the principal pairs of polar opposites on which the literary and artistic works are built. Another such is the opposition between movement and stillness.

"The supposed words of Galileo 'Eppur si muove!' apply to any decent painting, however static the content,"[121] remarked Jones, and if the voyage is the metaphor for the journey of the soul, then movement is life itself. In several of David Jones's watercolours and drawings movement and light body forth an essential goodness, not the steady north light desired by most artists, but the dynamic light of Turner or the light that flashes "As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame". As Paul Hills reminds us, David Jones preferred to work looking out from a window or verandah, where the light flooded into his face.

"In such situations of back-lighting, academic tonal relationships are confounded..." writes the art critic,[122] and in the transformation of this artistic technique into a literary style we can see how the writer admits of no distinction between the observed and the imaginative: perceived reality is recomposed and in such confusion, "a miracle of rare device", an order of things loved is discovered. But just as the Mass comes to stand increasingly and securely as the still centre of a life fragmented, so the image of the axle-tree stands at the still centre of the turning world of The Anathemata: "stat crux dum volvitur orbis", comprehending the restless sea voyages of the poem. The only "discovery" to be made is the reader's uncovering of stillness in movement:

**"Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled**
**About the centre of the silent Word."**[123]

Once the artistic eye "fails", language becomes correspondingly more free to represent mental imagery, but it can only register the inexpressible "Word" by being incommensurate with its object, and thus proceeds by a series of paradoxes to a recognition of the disjunction of the sublime. We see this technique most clearly in stanza twenty eight of Hopkins's "The Wreck of the Deutschland". But Jones, like Coleridge and Hopkins before him, recovers meaning by celebrating that very disjunction as evidence of transcendent order, "the region of the summer stars".

The critic John Holloway has voiced the feelings of a number of readers when faced with the vast panorama of the text of The Anathemata: the "immense elaboration...reduces to one relation repeated over and over, an endless catachresis of hinted identity, thrown off from a diffused agitation of particulars, a quasi-free association, a recession and thickness, a trans-finite array of not-plannedness."[124] He finds in the work "no deeper architectonic", but mere accretion. Jones himself offers hints regarding the schema of the poem, which go some way to agreeing with Holloway. Art, Jones avers, is "concerned with the proper integration and perfection of a shape",[125] and he suggests several "shapes" that the poem assumes: it is "about, or round and about, matters of all sorts which, by a kind of quasi-free association, are apt to stir in my mind at any time and as often as not 'in the time of the Mass'"; it is circular, or at least "it returns to its beginning"; and it is "like a longish conversation between two friends". His final image for the poem is "a kind of coat of many colours", and this indicates the fundamental unity-within-diversity which all of his other analogies imply. However helpful these remarks are intended to be by the author, (and they do direct our attention),[126] we are left to contemplate the "mystery" of the poem for ourselves. Critics have variously termed the poem "a circular maze" (Hooker), or "a circle whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere" (Blamires) and it seems to me that David Jones is urging us continually whilst reading the work to return to the starting point, ourselves, and to the beginning and ending of the poem: it

opens with the priest sacrificing at the altar, and closes with the presentation of Christ's own institution of the eucharistic sacrifice. Indeed, introducing the poem for a recording, David Jones observed that "The Anathemata is cyclic in character and however wide the circle, the action of the Mass is central to it and insofar as a circle can be said to have a 'beginning' or an 'end', it begins and ends with the Mass".[127]

The sustaining shape of The Anathemata, then, is the ritual of the Mass: it provides the unity within the diversity of the imagery of the poem and informs those details thoroughly, recalling James Joyce's observation that "rite is the poet's rest". It is, as we have seen, closely bound up with the complementary form of the voyage, since "what is pleaded in the Mass is precisely the argosy or voyage of the Redeemer...", and the poem's voyage imagery is constantly intertwined with that of the Mass: the Maundy Thursday supper room in the opening section is being made "ship-shape...all Bristol fashion" for the "Master of her" (p. 53). But the real significance of the Mass for David Jones's poem is that the eucharistic celebration is essentially "a making other" - the transubstantiation of bread and wine into Christ's body and the transformation of human daily existence into liturgical worship and ritual. This metamorphosis, which is at the heart of the controlling forms of the poem, so much so that the Mass and the voyage frequently blend into each other, also mirrors the constant transubstantiation of physical

into metaphysical reality in the imagery of the poem. Jones is setting out in The Anathemata to demonstrate how "concept and universality are married to the local and particular",[128] what he terms the "secret marriage" of the universal and the particular, content and form. In so doing, he orders the fragments of his writing, the content, towards the apprehension of a formal order, unifying and integrating fact and idea in what may be termed sacramental form. Hopkins's greatest achievement was to do just this in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" and the idea is one explored by Jones in two essays. The first is in "The Myth of Arthur" where he observes that: "The folk tradition of the insular Celts seem to present to the mind a half-aquatic world... it introduces a feeling of transparency and interpenetration of one element with another, of transposition and metamorphosis",[129] echoing the essentially sacramental nature of symbol in Coleridge's thought. The second refers to the poem which is a constant focus of his attention, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"; Jones writes that the poem's "allusions are themselves elusively presented, for its imagery has a metamorphic quality. With swift artistry, with something akin to the conjuror's sleight of hand, the images seem now this, now that, a little like the shape-shifting figures in Celtic mythology."[130] Jones is most satisfied when he finds a deep unity between form and content, "an interpenetration of one element with another", and David Jones finds this in the visual arts of Celtic countries and in Welsh poetry, where "the form and the content, the sound and the meaning, are

inextricably one" and "what we see is the visual image of their union";[131] sacramental poetry thus performs an eikonographic function, superficially diverse but showing unity. The poet, whether Hopkins or Jones, in a sacramental sense witnesses to that unity,[132] hence the opening of The Anathemata with its reference to the prophecy of David and the Sibyl begins where Hopkins's most significant poem concludes.[133] But Jones's poem does more than simply extend the content of "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire": the methodology and concepts of The Anathemata which combine to form the mature poetic of Jones have a continuity of being with those of Hopkins and, rightly understood, Jones's poem complements and re-interprets those truths uncovered by Hopkins.

The Anathemata can be understood as having dual controlling principles underwritten by a sacramental method. Those principles, as we have seen, are the Mass and the voyage, and for the sake of critical convenience I wish to divide the poem temporarily along these lines. The sections which have as their organisational model the Mass frame the work, so that the poem opens with "Rite and Fore-Time" and closes with "Mabinog's Liturgy" and "Sherthursdaye and Venus Day"; the remainder beginning with "Middle Sea and Lear-Sea" are contained within the larger framework and have as their theme the voyage. "Keel, Ram, Stauros" provides the transition from one theme to another, although throughout the poem one theme fluidly metamorphoses into another. Jones's task, properly conceived, is the integration of a Catholic tradition of Sacrament with a Romantic

tradition of sacramentalism or the unification of a scholastic philosophy with the painter's inward eye, that is, to inscape abstract conceptual knowledge with sensory, empirical observation.

What this David witnesses, unlike the Biblical David, is a chaos of seemingly unassimilable experience; like Hopkins, Jones is all too aware that "dead symbols litter to the base of the cult-stone, that the stem by the palled stone is thirsty, that the stream is very low." As Hopkins remarks, "...all is in an enormous dark/Drowned."[134] Jones's "cult man stands alone in Pellam's land", the subject, priest or poet, who holds up the efficacious sign in the midst of this dark. For Jones, like Hopkins, the sign is the poem, which is a thing made out of this chaos and, whilst witnessing the disintegration around it, witnesses <u>to</u> the possibility of integration and wholeness. By conflating the role of the priest and poet in the deliberately ambiguous term "cult man", Jones proposes that the poem, like the Mass itself, partakes of a greater reality, since as soon as man makes that which is significant - the sign of something other and greater - his act is of the same nature as the transubstantiation effected in the Mass by a representation of what was done in the Last Supper. Already the "setting" of the poem has moved from "fore-time" in the opening paragraph to our own age "at the sagging end and chapter's close" to "where a few are gathered in high-room/ and one, gone out", the Upper Room of the Last Supper. And as the placing of the poem becomes more difficult, so the language and form enact disconfirmation.

The linear narrative, which is concerned with the evolution of sacramental man within the geo-physical development of the earth, begins to stray from logical and chronological process on page 53 with the poet's digression on the hill in Jerusalem where Christ is instituting the eucharist and on Golgotha where that institution will be continued:

"(On this unabiding rock
for one Great Summer
lifted up
by next Great Winter
down
among the altitudes
with all help heights...
...Where's Ark-hill?
Ask both the Idas
And where
West horse-hills?
Volcae-remnants crag-carneddau?
Moel of the mothers?
the many colles Arthuri?" (p.55)

The section introduces the theme of the millions of years of climatic and geological change from which man emerged, and it does so by consciously abandoning ordered syntax and meaning to produce a macaronic complex of fragmented observation. "Process" narrative is exchanged for a meandering, seemingly

disordered abstraction, "a heap of all that I could find", to adapt David Jones after Nennius.[135] But since the basic "story" of the text is concerned with, at least in "Rite and Fore-Time" the pre-figurement of the eucharistic act to be discovered in artistic and religious cult-making in pre-history, then the confusion of the languages of religious ritual - "lifted up" - and geological process - "crag", "colles", "Moel" - creates a linguistic fusion of complex meaning akin to the difficult "truth" pursued. We see, for example, the cave artists of Lascaux described in terms of the rite which illumines them: "how they do, within, in an unbloody manner, under the forms of brown haematite, and black manganese...what is done without...that the kindred may have life". (p.60); how the dead of pre-history are incorporated into the Christian mystery by the poem's numerous references to the Requiem Mass; and the commencement of the Ice Age is imagined as the singing of Nocturns:

"The Vorzeit-masque is on
 that moves to the cosmic introit...
 If tonic and final are fire
 the dominant is ice
 if fifth the fire
 the cadence ice". (p.63)

The over-riding concern of the poet, here, it seems, is not only to show that geological transformation prepares the way for the transforming ritual act of the eucharist, but in the

complex dissolution of terminology to demonstrate a mystery which, according to Newman, lies hid in language and yet, paradoxically, is supra-linguistic: that in the apparently haphazard death and regeneration of the land and its inhabitants:

"From before all time
the New Light beams for them
and with eternal clarities
infulsit and athwart
the fore-times:" (p.73)

there is a purpose at work. Jones does not impose the observation, rather he uncovers it by seeing this informing process at work in religious and ritualistic gesture, and makes the revelation available as an act of imaginative perception. The truth is incarnate in the poetry, but is not purveyed as a doctrinal or dogmatic "fact". Thus we discern at the conclusion of the first section of The Anathemata that the sacramental act with which the poem opens and this section closes, is prepared for by the incorporation of geological process and human sign-making:

"How else from the weathered mantle-rock
and the dark humus spread
(where is enacted the night-labour
where the essential and labouring worm
saps micro-workings all the dark day long
for his creature of air)

should his barlies grow
who said
I am your Bread?" (p.82)

The recapitulation of the Mass is now given greater weight, since the first section of the poem has established beyond doubt that it gathers to itself a plethora of significance in which human making and the natural world are given purpose. What Jones achieves here is but the first stage in his realisation of the truth of the Christian myth, but in his inscaping of natural process and sacramental action he achieves Hopkins's realisation that the self may have direct and valid knowledge of spiritual reality in nature. It is a knowledge which like the "beginnings of his creature" is pre-conceptual and sensory, inarticulate even; but that inchoate knowledge will be tranformed into intellectual belief by "his perceptual light" (p.81). Coleridge in The Statesman's Manual: A Lay Sermon sums up the unification of sacred and secular discovered in "Rite and Fore-Time":

"...the stream of time continuous as life and a symbol of eternity, in as much as the past and future are contained in the present... . In the Scriptures both facts and persons must of necessity have a two-fold significance, a past and a future, a temporary and perpetual, a particular and a universal application".

"Rite and Fore-Time", since it posits David Jones's belief that somehow meaning may be gleaned from the natural world, can be seen as a precis of the whole work and a recapitulation of Hopkins's similar statement in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire". But the continuities between the two works are more profound and two passages from "Rite and Fore-Time" will serve to illustrate what is apparent elsewhere in David Jones's poem, and will serve as a critical model for later observations.

Hopkins's citing of Heraclitus in the title of his poem draws our attention to the writings of the pre-Socratic philosopher who claimed that first, there is a directive intelligence or Logos which stands behind and beyond the flux of existence, and secondly, that the four natural elements are constantly in a state of motion and are interchanged continuously (hence Heraclitus's statement that "the way up and the way down are one and the same"). The first nine lines of Hopkins's poem seek to illustrate the protean exuberance of the natural world and the remaining part of the poem demonstrates that purpose and meaning are given to this chaos by the "finger of God" which, by analogy, allows Hopkins to recover a sense of <u>human</u> meaning in this material world. The long passage which begins on page 61 of "Rite and Fore-Time" and which celebrates the geological development of the earth whilst seeking the emergence of sacramental man, derives much of its power from a Hopkinsian sense of dramatic variety and movement; indeed David Jones echoes Hopkins in his concentration on the four elemental qualities of nature and

his insistence on that quintessentially Hopkinsian term "dapple":

"Through all unconformities and the sills without sequence,
glorying all the under-dapple...
However violent the contortion or whatever the inversion
of the folding.
Oblique through the fire-wrought cold rock dyked from
convulsions under...
Through all metamorphs or whatever the pseudomorphoses."
(p.74)

The stress, as in Hopkins's poem, is upon the transition from nature to human nature, from external world to inner self and both poems enact a process of discovery and uncovering, in which empirical observation is transformed by the rational and imaginative self as a Coleridgean repetition of the creative divine fiat. Thus in a concentrated space the content of Hopkins's poem realises creation, fall ("manshape, that shone/ Sheer off, disseveral a star, death blots black out...") and redemption as an imaginative act, and in so doing, momentarily glimpses that ultimate pattern which contains man. Similarly, David Jones's first, and most significant section, seeks to <u>place</u> man, the poet, us -

"How else we?
or he, himself?
whose name is called He-with-us
because he did not abhor the uterus." (p.75)

- within the myth of the Christian redemptive pattern. He does so, like Hopkins, by recreating the myth so that the mystery is bodied forth in the content and form of the poem itself. Thus, if this first section of Jones's poem deals with the emergence of creation out of chaos and the development of man, subsequent sections allude to the post-lapsarian state and the ultimate triumph of redemption; but, as in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire", resurrection is not imposed: it is won from the inventiveness of the poet's art.

That inventiveness or mythopoeic imagination issues in the form of The Anathemata, exemplified once again in this first section. Jones's subject is that Heraclitean flux celebrated by Hopkins, but against the pre-Christian doctrinal model, Jones, like Hopkins, finds an identity which supercedes the original and contains it: that identity we may term sacramental. The Mass is a constant source of imagery, reference and allusion in the poem, and closely related to it is the theatrical imagery, in which human life is seen as a brief drama enacted on the stage of cosmic history:

"There's where the world's a stage
for transformed scenes
with metamorphosed properties
for each shifted set
...
The mimes deploy:
anthropoid
anthropoi."

> Who knows at what precise phase, or from what floriate green room, the Master of Harlequinade, himself not made, maker of sequence and permutation in all things made, called as from our co-laterals out, to dance the Funeral Games of the Great Mammalia, as long, long, long, before, these danced out the Dinosaur?" (p.62/63)

The passage displays various "levels" of meaning and, even given a perfunctory reading, the metaphor of life as a drama emerges clearly, if, initially, not very originally. But if we are to bring to bear upon the passage the pertinent Thomist notion of sacramentality and the "realities" which the Sacrament uncovers, then like many of Hopkins's mature poems, it is possible to see how profoundly a doctrinal concept in the poet's mind has been transformed into a formal literary technique.

Aquinas conceived of four "levels" of reality in his doctrine of the Sacraments and, as we have seen earlier, these are the material presence or literal reality; the metaphorical significance; the effect or gift of grace, that is the new spiritual orientation; and finally the ultimate mystical sense of divinity. The Mass is essentially a metamorphic action which "makes other" the artefacts of human existence, bread and wine, and with the co-operation of the communicant uncovers levels of reality within and without the participant. The Heraclitean flux of meaning to be observed here can also be discerned in the analogies of the poetic text, so that in the

quoted passage specifically, and applicable in the work generally, there is a continuous interchange of reality which leads the poet and reader to discover intuitively hidden connections between image and idea.

Thus, the foregoing passage can be seen to operate at its most basic and simplistic level as narrative: Jones is telling the story of man's development as a sacramental animal. The formal technique is hinted at in the epigraph to the whole poem:

**"It was a dark and stormy night, we sat by the calcined wall; it was said to the tale-teller, tell us a tale, and the tale ran thus: it was a dark and stormy night..."**

Jones refers to the literal reality of anthropologists' knowledge concerning those who were "shirted, kilted, cloaked, capped and shod, as were the five men of Jutland..." (p.62), but as the facts of pre-history are put before us, so the literal dissolves into the figurative: the world becomes a stage and in a metaphor which recalls Diaghilev's staging of Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring", men are called, puppet-like, to "dance the Funeral Games of the Great Mammalia". God is metaphorically realised as "the Master of Harlequinade"; Eden as the "floriate green-room". Individual words ingeniously metamorphose their meanings: "Now, from the draughty <u>flats</u>/ the ageless cherubs/pout the Southerlies..."(p.63). The new "spiritual" reality into which we are introduced works imaginatively: the poet asks us to re-create in our minds the

action of the theatrical metaphor, drawing upon our experience of the particular occasion to convey a universal truth. We are the audience for this drama of pre-history, distanced from the shifting sets and "metamorphosed properties" of the Ice Age, but reminded that, paradoxically, audience and actors are one in the dramatic present in which the parenthetical existence of this world is akin to the imitative reality of a stage set: truth can only be representational on the stage, just as we can only have a vague intimation of metaphysical reality through the sensible symbols of this world. Only by picturing this metaphor can we understand what Jones is saying about the way truth works. Jones promotes his argument by making it come alive, figuratively and imaginatively, and teaches us that one gift of grace is the imaginative act of perception. The final level of sacramentality is the apprehension of mystical reality: that exists here, as it does in Hopkins's poem, as a doctrine lying hid in language. To be, as Jones puts it, "anthropoi" rather than "anthropoid" is to understand the fullness of what it means to be human and to realise the mystery of our own ground of being. What this passage demonstrates is a flux of dynamic oppositions: between fact and idea, physical and metaphysical, word and image. This Heraclitean process which the whole poem embodies is essentially a dialectical one; and truth, according to Coleridge, works dialectically. There is no victory for one side or the other, but an active reconciliation or synthesis in a higher, mystical reality, in which men experience "a something ineffably greater than their own individual nature".[136] But Jones's mysticism has a curiously

human warmth; there is a wit and wry humour that touches us more closely than other writers on such topics and, as such, the journey into ourselves, the process of self enquiry from which we draw value and meaning, demands in Keat's terminology, "negative capability, that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason". The sacramental process is as much about inner truth as it is about divine reality, and both are concerned with revelation, an uncovering of truth; the complementary defining shape of the whole poem, then, can be seen as an enactment in Newman's terms of the process of assent to that "obscurely revealed" truth. It is a process which Jones elucidates through his exploration of sacramental symbol and guarantees in his rigorous examination of the "meaning" of much Christian doctrine.

The second section of David Jones's poem, "Middle-Sea and Lear-Sea" can be seen as a continuation of Jones's process of enquiry into cultural and individual identity, which keeps before it the ever-present notion of the sacrifice and salvation of the Mass giving purpose to human history. The section divides into two: the first part is concerned with the search for significant moments in our cultural history which can be said to be formative in our development. These moments are indeed "signs" for David Jones, underwritten by the date of Christ's Passion and Death which is seen insistently throughout the poem as the sign which incorporates and transforms

identity and is perpetuated in the Mass. We realise that as the poet gathers in the matter of Troy (p.84), the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus (p.85), the occupation of Britain by Rome, and the Dorian invasions, he is celebrating here the incarnational role of art and its history, just as "Rite and Fore-Time" provided a parallel account of the emergence of "poiesis". But the passage also displays one of the oppositions explored by David Jones in works such as The Sleeping Lord, that is, the confrontation between anonymous empire and individual state, between bellicosity (imaged in the Roman imperium's association with "the square-pushing Strider", Mars) and peace, and between movement and stillness:

**"The adaptations, the fusions**
**the transmogrifications**
**but always**
**the inward continuities**
**of the site**
**of the place."** (p.90)

Despite the darkness of these ages, worship and its sacred places are preserved and out of the flux of cultural history the inward continuity of the "makers of anathemata" prepares for the eucharistic action which will make sense of everything. Any artistic making which expresses otherness is, for David Jones, a religious act which presupposes that great religious drama of the eucharist, in which life is metamorphosed into the intense articulation of ritual.

The sea-voyage of the latter half of "Middle Sea and Lear-Sea" is a typical voyage setting out from Piraeus in the sixth to eighth century BC, in which the culture of the Mediterranean is brought by trade routes to the island in the "Lear Sea" of the title, "out of our mare/into their See" (P.97). In this case, the desire of the Mediterranean lands for Cornish tin occasions the voyage. The voyage is realised in superbly controlled literal description by David Jones:

"And suddenly:
the build of us
patterns dark the blueing waters
and shadow gulls
perch the shadows of the yards across the starboard bow-wave
and on the quiet beam water." (pp. 95/96)

But this voyage is suggestive of something more than is literally depicted. The conflation of the master of the boat with the God on Good Friday who is "holy, strong and immortal":

"Is it the Iacchos
in his duffle jacket
Ischyros with his sea-boots on?" (p.97)

and "the wounds of the bitter sea on him", converge to signify some sort of identification; but as Kenneth Clark says of a painting of a vase of flowers by David Jones: "we are far from the closed world of symbolism" and what David Jones offers is

not a closed one-to-one relationship, but an example of the Coleridgean symbol which is a means of exploring and penetrating deepest reality, whilst not containing it. The sea-captain "becomes" a Christ-figure; the ship assumes the identification of the Church in a typically patristic image. But, as in any sacramental symbol, we are never allowed to lose sight of the literal reality on which the image is constructed: here the storm, sea-shanties, navigational problems, all contribute to the "nowness" of the present. The literal reality, however, is illuminated by the containing "form", in this case the liturgical cadences of the sailors' shanty, which has the effect of re-focusing the meaning of the passage:

"Close-cowled, in his mast-head stall the solitary cantor
cups his numbed hand to say his versicle:
Land afore the beam to starb'd
one to two leagues.
And, as the ritual is, the respond is:
Land before the beam to starboard
one to two leagues...". (p.103)

The larger purpose, of which the sailors are unaware, but which infiltrates the description of this voyage, is emphasised by Jones in his footnote to the lines:

"...count us among his argonauts whose argosy you plead".

He writes:

**"What is pleaded in the Mass is precisely the argosy or voyage of the Redeemer, consisting of his entire sufferings, and death, his conquest of Hades, his resurrection and his return in triumph to heaven. It is this that is offered to the Trinity...".** (p.106)

If "Rite and Fore-Time" enacts the myth of creation, then the voyaging of these central sections of The Anathemata, it seems to me, suggests the eternal search for "home", the spiritual dwelling-place of mankind, which, like the marriage of the Master, Christ, to his ship, the Church, will not occur until the end of time, when that "ship" is safely berthed, according to Gerard Manley Hopkins, in the "heaven-haven of the reward". Hence the stress by David Jones upon the idea of restless movement and stillness, of alienation or exile and secure dwelling in the last pages of the section. The Phoenician sailors are types of Adam, as David Jones makes clear by his allusion to the argosy of the Redeemer, who will be incorporated in Christ's triumphant return to heaven. But the literal voyage ends in the "squall-mist", "spume blind", the port of call "distant three leagues and a quarter": there is no simplistic dogmatic assertion here. The mysterious resonance of these last pages denies conclusiveness. The questioning of the poet -

"Did he berth her?
and to schedule?
by the hoar rock in the drowned wood?" (p.108)

- parallels the metereological obfuscation of the sailors and our own uncertainty. These questions dominate the central sections of The Anathemata just as the quizzical voice of Hopkins is the dominant feature of the late sonnets: certainty does not lie in literal statement, but in wrestling with meanings which are often complex and irreducible. The equivocal questioning of David Jones suggests not only the ambiguity of religious statement, but also that doubt is a pre-condition of belief which anticipates the gradual assent of the conclusion of The Anathemata. We are reminded by the poet, as we gaze upon a landfall hidden and unknown, and momentarily glimpsed as the mist clears, of what Newman wrote in 1835:

"...Religious truth is neither light nor darkness, but both together; it is like the dim view of a country seen in the twilight, with forms half extricated from the darkness, with broken lines and isolated masses. Revelation, in this way of considering it, is not a revealed system, but consists of a number of detached and incomplete truths belonging to a vast system unrevealed, of doctrines and injunctions myteriously connected together."[138]

The Anathemata displays the cult-man whose "groping syntax" (p.49) strains towards those twilit forms and "isolated

masses", attempting to discern the incarnation of truth in common life. In so doing, the work of literature reveals the form of the questions which are the principal concern of theologians; but if the relationship between belief and the imagination is to be restored, as John Coulson makes clear, then literature must take those forms of faith preserved in metaphor, symbol and myth, which are also forms of the literary imagination, and make us see them anew. This is precisely what Hopkins and Jones are concerned to do.

The third section of the poem "Angle-Land" charts the progress of a vessel up the English Channel, past the Isle of Wight, onward around the East coast to Norfolk, and out into the North Sea and beyond. Two aspects immediately strike the reader: the first is the anonymity of the vessel and the second is the continuing interrogative method established at the conclusion of the previous section. This particular voyage is being made much later than the journey of the tin traders in "Middle-Sea and Lear-Sea"; in fact, as late as the Fifth Century AD the later voyage illustrates superficially the transport to "Pretani-shore" of the Germanic cultures of the Angles and Saxons, and the section speculates on the transformations that this will entail. This most difficult section of The Anathemata has a recessiveness and complexity of language which is at first sight utterly confusing, until we see Jones's intention. The invasions of the Saxons and Angles are depicted in a chaos of linguistic alteration and innovation, echoing the actual metamorphosis of the indigenous languages of the islands of Britain. Thus:

" Past where they placed their ingas-names
where they speed the coulter deep
in the open Engel fields
to this day.
How many poles
of their broad Angle hidage
to the small scattered plots, to the lightly furrowed erwau,
that once did quilt Boudicca's royal gwely?" (p.111)

When the vessel reaches Norfolk, the poet tries to give us some idea of what he termed "the mixed mess-up of Celtic, Teutonic, and Latin of the early dark ages" when the Roman imperium was still remembered; this "bogle-baragouinage" or goblin gibberish is rendered in the text as "broken, complicated and Babel-like".[139] It is heard by "the ancra-man" or anchorite, in the Fen Country "at the Geisterstunde/on Calangaeaf night" (p.112), that is at midnight on All Souls' Day, November 1st, which also happens to be the Winter Calends. One critic, Corcoran, sees this "mimetic linguistic energy" as "the product of a desire to situate in language the moment when a world vanishes and another struggles to be born, when a civilisation rots back into the earth which had once matured and sustained it...",[140] but I believe Jones is doing much more than that here. The mimetic artist imitates what is there in reality; he holds a mirror up to nature. But Jones's technique here is more properly that of the meontic artist who deals with an imagined reality; naturally, meontic art does not altogether abandon the forms of this world, and thus Jones works through the complicated linguistic collage to

testify to an ontology which can be expressed in and through language, but which is supra-linguistic. Thus in the following passage David Jones shows that the Angles and Saxons avoided burying their dead in the old Romano-British settlements for fear of raising the ghosts of those times:

**"(Close the south-west wall of the chester, without the orbit,**
**if but a stone's throw: you don't want to raise an Icenian**
**Venta's Brettisc ghost.**
**He'll latin-runes tellan in his horror-coat standing:**
**IAM REDIT ROMA**
**his lifted palm his VERBUM is.)"** (p.112)

The stress is upon the word or "verbum", the Latin spelling intentionally reminding us of its use in the Mass where sign and word have a special significance for the poet. The Word of God, Christ, through whom all things are made, is the archetype of the word in all human artists' minds, and Jones significantly demonstrates that instressing the sheer complexity of linguistic difference is the Word of God, just as the "New light beams for them.../infulsit and athwart/the fore-times..." (p.73). It is this which gives purpose and meaning to the "bogle-baragouinage" of the early dark ages and to the speech of Ebenezer Bradshaw, the skipper in the following section "Redriff". The density of language in this passage exemplifies what Coleridge defined as the quintessential characteristic of religious language, in which words "convey all their separate meanings at once, no

matter how incomprehensible or absurd the collective meaning may be...".[141]

The section ends with further confirmation that these central parts of the poem exemplify the parenthetical existence of mankind between creation and redemption by its stress upon the brothers Balin and Balan who, by misadventure, killed one another. As such, the symbol widens to include an association of meaning, so that past and future are momentarily and imaginatively linked: Balin and Balan are England and Germany, close tribal brothers linguistically related, but "toward the last phase/of our dear West" fratricidally destructive. The image echoes the sestet of Hopkins's poem "God's Grandeur" - "the last lights off the black West went" - and is apocalyptic in tone, particularly when we realise that the spear with which Balin wounded Pellam in Malory's account is the spear which wounded Christ and thus caused the land to be laid waste. Fact and legend, past and future, intermingle in a symbol of man's internecine rivalry and mortality - "It is the blight man was born for"; once again, the voyage is incomplete as the poet oscillates between doubt and belief, witnessing death, witnessing to life. But as my second chapter illustrated, this saying and unsaying, the propounding of verbal and ideological contradictions and ambiguities, are all terms for an unsettling of usage, so that sense refuses to be fixed conceptually by the poet in his use of metaphor. The poet must "dislocate language into meaning" if he is to keep religious truth in growth and by extension, he must undergo the experience of diasparation if he is to translate faith into belief in Newmanesque terms.

"Redriff" forms the brief central section of the poem, consisting of a speech by Ebenezer Bradshaw, a Thames-side mast-and block-maker whose original was, in fact, David Jones's maternal grandfather. Bradshaw addresses the captain of the ship which has anchored at Rotherhithe or "Redriff" in the heart of London's docks; but no name is given to the captain, and the anonymity of the ship's master is echoed in the questions which suggest the difficulty of "placing" the location of the voyage:

"Or
**did he make the estuary?**
...
**Did he berth in the Greenland or was she moored**
**in the pool?**
**Did he tie up across the water**
**or did she toss at the Surrey shore?"** (p.118)

Jones thus perpetuates the sense of disjunction between the reader and the "facts" of the narrative; we are continuously and deliberately unsettled by the poem's refusal to ossify meaning and by its remaining a crucible of transformation. As Neil Corcoran has said: "the 'sign-making' of the voyage continues...".[142]

In this section of the poem David Jones does insist upon one of the central "meanings" of The Anathemata and that is, the significance of making or craftsmanship. Bradshaw is placed by Jones in that tradition of art which includes poets

as well as artisans. In an essay Jones declared:

"'The virtue of art is to judge', 'Art is a virtue of the practical intelligence': Bradshaw knew nothing of these definitions, but, unknown to himself, he practised them. By a happy chance Joyce, according to Gogarty, declared boat-building to be comprehended in practical life as 'art', no less than the making of a poem. It was no accident that the bardic poets of Wales called themselves 'seiri cerdd', 'carpenters of song'."[143]

Bradshaw is thus related by David Jones to all those other "makers" throughout the poem, and to the poet himself, for the point that David Jones stresses is that by his making, man becomes most like his Creator and partakes of the nature of redemption. In the wasteland of human existence, David Jones seems to be saying, man can momentarily recepitulate that divine creative fiat and realise his fullest potential. But Bradshaw is the first of Jones's makers to speak: the silent array of "form-making proto-makers" (p.59) culminates in the Thames-side shipwright who "words" his craft, just as the poet incarnates his experience:

" As sure as I was articled, had I the job of mortisin' the beams to which was lashed and roved the Fault in all of us, I'ld take m'time and set that aspen transom square to the Rootless Tree
or dash m' buttons!
till the Day o' Doom
to sail the bitter seas o' the world!" (p.121)

Jones cleverly exploits the irony in Bradshaw's boast to bring together in one complex fusion the dominant themes of the poem, the Redemption of mankind's "fault" by the sign of what was done on the Cross at Calvary and which is perpetuated in the propitiatory voyage of the Redeemer recalled in the Mass. The anticipation of the conclusion of the poem is carefully contrived.

If Bradshaw represents one aspect of that redemptive process which begins with the recognition of "the Fault in all of us" and which culminates in the apprehension of ultimate truth in "Sherthurdsdaye and Venus Day", then the Lady of the Pool, Elen Monica, is the logical extension of what Jones sees as the transubstantiating role of the artist, in which "the waste sad time/stretching before and after" is redeemed. In the figure of Bradshaw, Jones discerns that man's making partakes of that definitive Incarnation which gives meaning to the lesser and constantly informs it; we can say that Jones shows us <u>what</u> aligns man with the divine. But in "The Lady of the Pool" David Jones uncovers much more importantly <u>how</u> this may be, and in so doing guarantees the validity of the vision which is the climax of the poem. In Newman's terms, the relationship between imagination and belief is restored and revivified, because Jones <u>earns</u> the conditions necessary for the resolution of the assent of faith into the explicit certitude of belief, that "mysterious certainty" designated by Gerard Manley Hopkins. Jones's technique is, in this most satisfying section, superbly controlled and it is here that the sacramental tradition is perhaps most fully realised.

Elen Monica, the Lady of the Pool, is a London lavender seller who, by giving voice to the "great spirit of the past", establishes the myths and cultural deposits which have accrued around the site of London, and in particular around the Pool itself. John Holloway has remarked of this section that "it makes one speak of the creation of myth as well as of its re-creation",[144] and Jones realises in this figure not only "our collective London myth" as he terms it, but also an immense synthesis of material - legendary, mythical, philosophical, theological, literary, artistic, liturgical - which she embodies as she celebrates the central "sign" of the poem, the mysterious certainty of religious truth.

The whole of the section, with two brief exceptions, is devoted to the direct speech of Elen Monica: the brief introductory section is the first of those exceptions which queries whether the sea-captain did meet her "East-Seaxna-nasal" accent and only really serves to put us in the sea-captain's place, so that what follows is as much addressed to us as him, and immediately obliges us to listen and to interpret what she is saying. The shape of the section is dictated by the Lady's monologue which begins with her lavender-seller's cry, moves into a litany of the London churches outside which she carries on her trade, and then into an anamnesis of her three lovers, an Oxford clerk, a free-stone mason and a boatswain from Milford Haven. Neil Corcoran has observed that the "tone of Monica's address is a curiously ambivalent one that manages to combine humour, vituperation and a sort of wan regretfulness",[145]

and in a letter to one of the poem's critics, Jones defines this when he writes that:

"The decay of the year's fall and the coming on of winter are linked in my mind with the introit of the lavender girl on the street. Her cry was of great beauty but was mysteriously sad...".[146]

Jones appropriately sets the section at the time of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, on September 14th, which anticipates the following section, "Keel Ram and Stauros", and also keeps before us the central sign of the poem, the Axile Tree; more than that, Jones's later hints at what is also an over-riding concern of this central section of the poem, the decay and fall of man, imaged here in Hopkinsian terms as autumnal decline; and the way in which that fall is given new life and purpose is to be celebrated in the wintry section, "Mabinog's Liturgy", which deals with Christ's Incarnation, and towards which the poet's syntax and meaning strains.

The monologue divides into a celebration of London's churches, an evocation of Monica's many lovers and an account of the Incarnation and Crucifixion of Christ - all seemingly unrelated, and yet part of the "signa" which her tradition has given to her, and like the poet, her role is to restore to life and health those sacramental symbols: we are asked to "read the unshapeable..." and to discern in Monica's speech the "Word, that heard and kept thee and uttered thee outright".[147]

In Monica's litany of London churches where the feast of the exaltation will be celebrated (p.127 ff), we realise that Jones is looking back to his first section "Rite and Fore-Time" both stylistically and in terms of subject matter, for Monica constantly evokes the "faiths under Paul" and the pagan temples which once occupied the sites now taken by Christian churches:

" At the Lady-at-Hill
above Romeland's wharf-lanes
at the Great Mother's newer chapelle
at New Heva's Old Crepel.
(Chthonic matres under the croft:
springan a Maye's Aves to clerestories.
Delphi in sub-crypt:
luce flowers to steeple.)" (p.127)

She imagines how the site of St. Paul's was once sacred to Jupiter; at once we see Monica's Christianity as the fulfilment of that tradition of worship and artefacture perennially celebrated by Jones throughout the poem and throughout all time. Her Christianity, palimpsest-like, has the dim outlines of older, darker traditions below it, and which we glimpse momentarily, rather like the pagan figures who have been laid to rest beneath the Christian churches as preservers and guardians of place:

" At each adytum over
where under the fathering figures rest that do keep us all.
So it's fabled
in Taffy's historias and gests of Brut the Conditor -
romans o' Belins, 'Wallons an' Wortipors
aged viriles buried under..." (p.163)

As we read the passages then (or listen to it as Jones intended), we realise that the ground is certainly a preserver of ancient continuities and traditions, but it is also a means of sustenance and growth; and that as we search for meaning to emerge from the complex multi-layered texture of Monica's speech, we recognise that we are imaginatively enacting the same process. "What's under works up", insists Monica: out of the literalism of the text emerges a figurative understanding of imaginative growth. Much like the Coleridgean symbol of Truth as a spring or fountain, the discovery of which is often impeded, often obscure, so the human effort involved in uncovering the springs and powers of sustaining growth is an absolutely necessary capacity of the imagination and a precursor to an understanding of <u>how</u> man may be redeemed, although it is often checked by doubt, opposition or incomprehension. So Jones is seeking to express here a mystical quality at the heart of human experience: something that is common to us all, but beyond common reason or language. The imagination brings life out of a dead world - "it is essentially vital," as Coleridge says, and "it

struggles to idealise and to unify" - applicable particularly to David Jones who was writing The Anathemata in the blitzed and apparently irredeemable waste land of the Second World War.

Elen Monica, then, through her speech and actions, incarnates that protean vigour of the imagination which, properly understood, embraces and orders the converging probabilities towards spiritual assent. This is most clearly seen in Jones's equating her with Flavia Julia Helena, the mother of Constantine; Jones in his note (p.131/2) describes this mythic figure who represents "a fusion of typic figures of great splendour and depth: Imperatrix plus numinous 'beauty' plus Holy Woman". The key words here are "fusion" and "depth": Elen Monica likewise fuses together a deeply recessive series of roles. She spends much time in scholastic dispute with her first lover, the Oxford clerk; to the free-stone mason she is "Flora Dea", "the female guardian deity of Rome, essentially oracular and representing the whole female principle" (p.132) and for Jones this "female principle" embodies a tenderness and creativeness which stands against the rational "male" elements of the poem. It is she who, in a conflation of the symbols of womanhood and the imagination, "gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truth, of which they are the conductors". Like Coleridge's Abyssinian maid, or Hopkins's nun, Jones's Lady of the Pool is in Coleridge's terms "a living educt of the Imagination; of that reconciling and mediatory power" which removes her from the ordinary processes

of time and places her "in the order of signs". Elen Monica, like the nun in "The Wreck of the Deutschland", asserts, defines and incarnates the essential meaning of the poem: she, as symbolic of the mysterious workings of the Imagination, gives life to, or "words" those "signa", in particular the Incarnation and Crucifixion of Christ, so that they are invigorated and made accessible to us. Her role is timeless and infinitely creative, underlined by the line from King Lear which Jones uses as an epigraph to the whole poem: "This prophecie Merlin shall make for I live before his time". Monica echoes this when she declares to her sea-captain:

> **"Don't eye me, captain**
> **don't eye me, 'tis but a try-out and very much betimes:**
> **For we live before her time."**
>
> (p.146)

having already transformed herself into a mermaid. Her "shape-shifting" is the dream reality of the imagination, charged with meaning, which "dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create".

Those "signs" which the imagination must dissolve in order to restore and re-create are embraced by Monica who breathes life into what have become out-moded, even cliched, symbols. What she enacts, we are required to do: to understand, we must make these images come alive in our minds; Jones, like Hopkins

and Coleridge before him, insists in this passage that "the creative faculty to imagine that which we know" is <u>how</u> we will translate faith into living belief. Accordingly she re-tells the story of the Incarnation and the history of the Church in terms of a voyage (pp. 137-143) which in its allegorical form echoes the larger concern of the poem, and anticipates the dramatic realisation of "Mabinog's Liturgy". But perhaps most significant is the climax of this section, Elen Monica's account of the Crucifixion:

"On the ste'lyard on the Hill
weighed against our man-geld
between March and April
when bough begins to yield
and West-wood springs new
Such was his counting-house
whose queen was in her silent parlour
on that same hill of dolour
about the virid month of Averil
that the poet will call cruel.
Such was her bread and honey
when with his darling Body (of her body)
he won Tartary.
Then was the droughts of March moisted to the root by that shower that does all fruit engender - and do constitute what they hallow an' chrism these clerks to minister that kings and queens may eat therof and all poor men besides."

(pp.157/158)

For Coleridge, Hopkins and Jones, poetry - as symbolic utterance - is not deceptive; it is rather the most full and exacting possible use of language. This is not because it is clear and distinct - because it defines or sets limits to things - but precisely because it does not. A work of art is "rich in proportion to the variety of parts which it holds in unity".[148] The most successful poem or symbol, deriving as we have seen from the theological definition of sacrament, is that which successfully holds in balance the widest reach of reality. What we have in Elen Monica's Crucifixion story is "a use of language in which words do not stand for terms possessing a constant meaning but are to be seen as components in a field of force that take their value from the charge of the field as a whole."[149]

Using the sacramental model we can see, then, that the story being told at its most basic level is the trial and Crucifixion of Christ, and the salvific nature of that act. The language used by Jones, however, demands that we look anew at what he is saying: the metaphorical reality which causes us to re-locate our apprehension of the old story derives its strength from the poet's use of nursery rhyme, mediaeval poetry on the Passion and the "Vexilla Regis", all of which combine to unsettle the reader. The rhythms and cadences of Monica's speech momentarily lose their colloquial disorder to imitate a rocking motion; as one critic has observed: "it is as though her ordinary speech patterns here cradle the different language of religious contemplation, forming a kind of linguistic pieta".[150] The

cumulative effect of such eikonographic writing, like the sacramental gift of grace and the anagogical reality it opens up, is twofold: the sacramental symbol not only points to the transcendent, but is also the means whereby the transcendent or absolute claims us. So in one sense we discover symbols; but in another they discover us, as we or the poet, express, embody or perform the actions they enjoin. For Jones, following Coleridge and Hopkins, sacrament and symbol are the particular forms for the realising of religious assent; sacraments insist upon the performance of an act necessary for the further and more complete understanding of our assent, and, as in religion, so in poetry: we are required to make a complex act of inference and assent to Elen Monica's account, and we begin as Coulson says "by taking on trust expressions which are usually in analogical, metaphorical or symbolic form, and by acting out the claims they make: understanding religious language is a function of understanding poetic language".[151]

"The Lady of the Pool" shows us, then, how man may reclaim spiritual truth; and by a type of baptism we are introduced to those symbols and sacraments which are the particular forms for the realising of religious assent, and which are given ultimate sanction and meaning by the Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection of Christ. The exploration of these "signa" concludes The Anathemata, but it is an exploration which requires an act of trust in these "significant and warm images" (p.241). Thus, at the end of "The Lady of the Pool" Monica takes pity upon and tries to save "a pretty boatswain's boy" from "the rope's end"

(p.167), declaring that she would "ransom him with m'own woman's body". In this gratuitous act, innocent and generous, we see imaged the conditions for man's redemption: it is an "act of Grace", apparently independent of the conscious human will; yet in accord with the divine, like the Mariner's act of blessing or Hopkins's recognition that "I am all at once what Christ is, since he was what I am...".

Jones in The Anathemata, like Hopkins in "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire", exchanges spontaneity for reflection as the lively human presence of Monica is replaced by the meditation of the final section; but the relationship between faith - what is imaginatively credible and creative - and the deliberate character of belief cannot be artificially separated, even though Jones seems to draw a distinction between the act of faith as a precursor to the expressed beliefs of "Sherthursdaye and Venus Day". Coulson prepares us best when he writes that:

> "The relation between faith and belief in general, and poetic faith and religious belief in particular, is peculiarly one of overlap, since in defining one term we find ourselves implying the other: belief is not only where we end, it may be where we begin; and faith cannot be expressed except in terms of its implicit beliefs".[152]

"Keel, Ram, Stauros" continues that meditation upon the key "signa" of The Anathemata, "the stone, the fonted water, the fronded wood" (p.56) which Jones begins in "Rite and Fore-Time",

with an examination of the "fronded wood". Schematically this section is important because it devotes time to a celebration of one of the three principal symbols of the poem, looking back to the elaborate attention given to stone in "Rite and Fore-Time" and anticipating the contemplation of water in "Sherthursdaye and Venus Day"; further, it concludes the voyage begun in "Middle-Sea and Lear-Sea" in the harbour at Athens by ending in the same place; and taking both "sign" and voyage together, it is at once a beginning and an ending in the sense that Coulson understands. The voyage of "Middle-Sea and Lear-Sea" prompts the question from the poet:

"Did he berth her?
and to schedule?
by the hoar rock in the drowned wood?"

and that interrogatory, uncertain method is appropriately brought to a close at the conclusion of "Keel, Ram, Stauros" with Jones's resolution:

"Pious, eld, bright-eyed
marinus
Diocesan of us.
In the deeps of the drink
his precious dregs
laid up to the gods.
Libation darks her sea.
He would berth us
to schedule." (p.182)

The literal voyage is subsumed by the figurative, which is indeed the technique of the whole poem: "the vine-juice skipper" will berth, but at an indeterminate time:

"I do not know!
I do not know!!
I do not know what time is at ...
...or whether before or after
was it when -
but when <u>is</u> when?" (p.170)

The poet refuses to place the event and deliberately denies temporal particularity, since what this section increasingly reveals is the mysterious order of sacramental time. The literal voyage ceases, or at least returns from whence it came; as T.S. Eliot writes, "the end of all our exploring/will be to arrive where we started/And know the place for the first time", so that in "Rite and Fore-Time" we saw the image of the Church as a ship (p.52/53), but now by inversion we look down into the darkness of the vessel and see the ship as the Church:

"Down
far under him
the central arbor
the quivering elm on which our salvation sways.
Baum, baulk
ridging the straked, dark
inverted vaults of her." (p.173)

The inversion not only allows Jones to introduce the primary significance of wood as "stauros", the wood upon which Christ was crucified, but also to present dramatically that same wood as the saviour of the crew from the sea and by extension the means of mankind's salvation. The realisation that physical and spiritual salvation depend upon the "keel" is articulated forcibly by Jones:

"Prone for us
buffeted, barnacled
tholing the sea-shock
for us." (p.174)

That last phrase - "for us" - remote and isolated, enacts the terrible knowledge which has been gained: we cannot but choose to throw ourselves on God's mercy and sustaining love, since in this existential moment Jones, like Kierkegaard, sees our condition as that of being out over 70,000 fathoms, and "what we cannot imagine, we cannot, in the proper sense of the word, conceive".[153] Thus, by a gradual convergence belief is induced, rather than proved, and for belief to be credible, as Newman realised, it must be primarily so to the imagination.

The translation of the imaginative act of faith into the certainty of belief is, according to Newman, a process of focusing stereoscopically or the gradual convergence of probabilities; the translation is not achieved without difficulty since any statement of belief is highly ambiguous

in form. Jones embraces the paradox of the Cross in "Keel, Ram, Stauros" by apprehending it literally as the instrument of death but metaphorically as the symbol of life: it is the "stauros" on which Christ was crucified: it is also the "ram", the agent of war and violence; but it is finally the symbol of redemption, the fulfilment of the cult symbols, "always lifted up...". The ship is safely berthed at the conclusion of this section, but not before encountering storm and loss; faith, Jones indicates, can be re-ordered into belief, but not without disconfirmation, alienation and difficulty. The "hidden wood" of the Cross is "lignum for the life of us", but it is hidden: our firm assent is to what is obscurely revealed. Since the mystery we grope towards is articulated in the paradoxes of Incarnation, it is apposite that the section which follows, "Mabinog's Liturgy", should deal with the story of Christ's birth.

Jones chooses to approach the mystery by situating Christ's birth at a point in relation to the development and transformation of the Celtic world, hence the title of the section. By using the term "mabinog", Jones views the ritual through a specifically Celtic tradition, since "mabinog" means a tale of the birth of Christ, and Jones frames the gospel story by the analogy to Peredur, the Percival figure of the "Mabinogion", who "frees the waters". But "mabinog" also is the poet or maker himself, the artist embarking on his career, and so Jones subtly conjoins the re-enactment of the liturgy of Christ's birth with his own "making", the poet giving word to "...him that present and

past/Heaven and earth are word of, worded by...". The pun in the title brings before us the individual poet's struggle towards real assent, the struggle with meaning in order to renew what "lies hid in language". Jones's achievement is in his imaginative fusion of gospel, myth and legend, to create a new truth.

The section opens with a precise dating technique which we have seen earlier in the poem and which specifically frames the events in Palestine from the viewpoint of what was happening in the Celtic fringe of the Roman imperium. The factual dating begins to give way, however, to figurative expression as legend, and nursery rhyme obtrude:

> **"They say it's Tuesday's child**
> **is chose**
> **this year's Mab o' the Green**
> **mundi Domina**
> **or was she Monday's**
> **total beauty**
> **Stabat by the Blossom'd Stem?"** (p.188)

The culmination is the Incarnation itself which, as Jones says, is "where we come in: not our advanced details now, but us and all our baggage" (p.190).

The birth occasions a transfiguration of time in the poem: the moment of Christ's birth is set in immediate juxtaposition

to his death, and it is as if chronological time buckles, as in Hopkins's poem "The Windhover", at the moment of the poet's perception of what Christ represents through his birth and death. The theological meaning of Christ's life not only instresses the whole of The Anathemata, and the poet's life, but, "being both retroactive and pre-determining" according to Hugo Rahner, inscapes together fact and legend, Mary and Guenevere, Roman imperium and Classical myth, in the liturgy of the Mass. What Hopkins uncovers in "The Windhover" is sacramental time and we are similarly introduced into this reality by the allusions to the masses of the Christmas season which conclude "Mabinog's Liturgy" and by what Jones termed in Epoch and Artist, the mythical "world dance which has for its maypole the gleaming Tree on which the world-ransom was weighed".[154] The poet calls in various mythological figures to witness the "dendrite beauties" of the Crucifixion - (p.190 ff.), Chloris, Flora, Sibyl, Calypso, Persephone and Nestor - and in a moment of great intensity the poet unifies the Christian and pre-classical worlds:

"Martha! stop that endless meddling!
and don't tie Argos up...
Let him come gently.
See! he would reach to lick
the trickling blossoms
by the ancient stone." (p.192)

The recognition of Ulysses by Argos in the hero's homecoming is echoed here in the "recognition" of Christ as saviour and hero; the action echoes that of the Lady of the Pool in its spontaneity and we discern it in the poet's alignment with his predecessor whose "heart in hiding" eventually comes to see the image of Christ, in "Hurrahing in Harvest":

"...which two when they once meet,
the heart rears wings bold and bolder...".

The two "scenes" which close "Mabinog's Liturgy" are both liturgical celebrations of Christ's birth, the first concerns Gwenhwyfar (the Welsh Guinevere), wife of Arthur, who observes the Christmas Mass, and the second a discussion between the three Welsh witches, Marged, Mal Fay and Mabli. The essence of these episodes is to be found in the witnessing role of all four women: as both woman and symbol, Gwenhwyfar, like Mary, and in a linguistic echo of Hopkins's nun, words or gives birth to the "image of him who alone imagined and ornated us, made fast of flesh her favours, braced bright, sternal and vertibral, to the graced bones bound" (p.196). Gwenhwyfar becomes one with the poet, both of whom are intent upon making an anamnesis, she of Christ's birth in the Christmas Mass, but this re-calling for Jones means more than a simple memorial: "in the scriptures of both the Old and New Testament anamnesis and the cognate verb have a sense of 're-calling' or 'representing' before God an event in the past so that it becomes here and now operative by its effects."[155] The powerful sacramental sense which Jones

understands by the term "anamnesis" is shared by Hopkins as both poets strive to re-present those "signa" which have been handed to them: "For so conceived, so to conceive thee is done".[156]

The witches' often learned discussion of Marian theology looks back to Gwenhwyfar's witnessing and amplifies one of the increasingly dominant themes of The Anathemata as it draws to its close: one of the witches asks, "for how should the eternal hypostases be conjoined with a flesh not substantial?" (p.214), echoing the description of the Son in the Boast of Christ as "dux et pontifex" - "priest and bridge-builder" (p.207). The whole poem is ordered to express this climactic observation that the Incarnation is a co-operative act of love between the divine and human will, in which physical and metaphysical realities are conjoined. But Jones, like Hopkins before him, does not forget the words of Mary at the Annunciation: "fiat mihi...", "be it unto me according to thy word...":[157] the meeting of God and man demands a response or assent to the Word which, according to Coleridge, "heats and burns, makes itself felt. If we do not grasp it, it seems to grasp us."[158] Man's unique role is to act as pontifex, imitating Christ, conjoining the worlds of nature and spirit through the medium of the sacraments and one Sacrament in particular, the Mass. Thus the section concludes with an evocation of the three Masses of Christmas in the Roman churches of St Mary Major and St Anastasia; in the celebrant's words - "Per evangelica dicta/Deleantur nostra delicta", "By the words of the gospel may our faults be blotted

out..." - we see how the Word of God is eternally generated in the mind of man, and what the union of Word and word signifies for the sacramental poet.

In the final section of the poem, "Sherthursdaye and Venus Day" Jones meditates upon the significance of Christ's crucifixion to the institution of the eucharist celebrated at the conclusion of "Mabinog's Liturgy": the ending of the poem is notable for its lack of conversation and action; instead, Jones chooses a deliberative tone, appropriate to his searching for the final purpose of human life and the final meaning of human history, which he finds incarnated in the eucharistic mystery. From Aquinas and de la Taille Jones distils the essence of his conviction that the mass "makes sense of everything", centred as it is upon the death and resurrection of Christ, and fulfilling all the "poiesis" celebrated throughout The Anathemata. It is the figure or persona of Christ, however, which articulates the modulation of faith into belief for the poet, and which incorporates both the densely metaphorical content of the poem and its dualist technique in a cognate symbol of fulfilment: "I am all at once what Christ is, since he was what I am" declares Hopkins, and it is in the unsettling paradox of Christ as "this jack, joke", the broken "potsherd" of the Holy Week Passion and the triumphant "immortal diamond" of the resurrected, conquered self, that Jones, and his predecessor, rest. We see most clearly in this final section that "adunating power" which Coleridge termed the fullest use of

the imagination, in its ability to hold in paratactic reconcilation contradictory elements; this is the precursor to spiritual growth, saying and unsaying to a positive result.

The action performed on "Sherthursdaye" or Maundy Thursday and "Venus Day" or Good Friday is seen as the culmination of the mythic activity of all the poem's heroes: as "the signum" (p.228) Christ sums up and fulfils all those typic heroes who have prepared for his victory over death. Jones thus aligns with the anti-type "the hidden lords in the West tumuli" of "Rite and Fore-Time"; Peredur, who must free the waters and ask the question; John Barleycorn who "must be broken off at knee"; a Roman paterfamilias who "empties himself/to the Lar of this place" and, amongst others, Melchesidec, the Old Testament type of Christ. If these images suggest the eikon of Christ in glory, what Hopkins termed the "Pride, rose, prince, hero of us, high-priest", then we are quickly made to conceive also of the broken human scapegoat of Calvary: here as the critic has noted, "the last of the poem's hill-sites reduces the creator of vast cosmic plenty to weeping and thirsting from a 'spoil-dump'"[159]:

**"His cry**
**from the axile stipe**
**at the dry node-height**
**when the dark cloud brights the trembling lime-rock...**
**...As the bleat of the spent stag**

toward the river-course
he, the fons-head
pleading, ad fontes
his desiderate cry:
SITIO." (p.237)

The climax and conclusion of the poem would appear to be here: to adapt Dylan Thomas, "after the first death, there is no other"; and, indeed, even in the types chosen as prefigurements of Christ, sacrifice and death loom large, to the virtual exclusion of any notion of resurrection. But the imposition of theological cliche, a trap into which Hopkins falls at the conclusion of "The Wreck of the Deutschland", is avoided by Jones in the imaginative realisation of the paradox of the symbol of Christ's crucifixion; the poet queries its meaning in the context of a Tennysonian view of nature, "red in tooth and claw". What possible value can be retrieved from this act in the midst of an uncaring, amoral nature: "Who furthers the lammergyer?" asks Jones, as it searches for its food, and "the mated corbie/with his web.../prods at the dreaming arbor..." (p.240). The questioning poet wants authentication for his assent, and it is in the "answers" to these questions that growth occurs: this is the "resurrection" of meaning from the "dead symbols (which) litter to the base of the cult-stone". The acceptance that birds of carrion are "cared for" as much as the fall of a sparrow - "They say he said he cared/when sparrows fall -/shall he deny what's proper to the raven's bill?" (p.240) is <u>part</u> of the answer; indeed the recognition that

"Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:/...myself it speaks and spells,/Crying What I do is me: for that I came",[160] is a central, primodial act of blessing, shared by Hopkins, Jones and Coleridge's Mariner as he watches the serpents playing on the surface of the sea; they, like the birds of prey, are "his creatures" (p.242), which confirms them in their otherness, their right to have place and home and existence in the universe. But Jones, like Hopkins in his sonnet, "says more": "the just man.../Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is - Christ." If the poet, or theologian, is to make a real assent to the objects of faith, then he must use his imagination, his "abrupt self" to undertake "the intolerable wrestle with meaning, since what he seeks to renew lies hid in language".[161] And it is the act of imagining and wording which, as we have seen, is given meaning by the Incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ, and defines the difference between humanity and brute creation.

The figure of Christ is thus conceived in an audacious and unsettling image as "this Jugatinus of the noose, yoked for his nuptials on Skull Ridge" (p.241): from Augustine Jones borrows the reference to Jugatinus, the conjugal god, and in a paradoxical assertion, a death lament becomes a bridal song. The poem concludes with this same image:

**"But the fate of death?**
**Well, that fits The Gest:**
**How else be coupled of this Wanderer**
**whose viatic bread shows forth a life?**

- in his well-built megaron.
If not by this Viander's own death's monument
by what bride-ale else lives his undying Margaron?
- whose only threnody is Jugatine
and of the thalamus..." (p.243)

In the imaginative act of the poet we see a Coleridgean polarity of opposite or discordant qualities: this death is also the means whereby we have life: we can only be wedded to Christ, as he is to His Church, by apprehending the difficult duality-within-unity of what the image of Christ means. But what Jones shows above all else is how we can alleviate that difficulty without sacrificing imaginative integrity, since although imagination must first dissolve, diffuse and dissipate, in order to re-create, it does not follow that a language which the poetic imagination has thus dislocated must remain fragments shored against the poet's ruin. Just like Moses being on holy ground before the burning bush which was not destroyed, the artist listens to another voice. The burning bush is not wasted to a heap of ash, but in the consuming is manifestation of divinity, the transubstantiation of nature into vital significance. It is the artist's role to recognise this real presence by taking what he sees and re-presenting it, not in exact imitation of nature but as a free parallel. As Coulson writes: "this is what it is for the imaginative act to be completed, when the new signs become anchored in the thing signified".[162] It is Jones's achievement in the midst of the twentieth century to show how much a poet can affirm without comprising imaginative integrity,

and like T.S. Eliot he establishes how "doubt and uncertainty are a variety of belief".

The final affirmation, however, must still come to terms with "that anguished sense of cultural breakdown",[163] the personal and social wasteland emphasised at the conclusion of "Sherthursdaye and Venus Day" as it had been at the beginning of "Rite and Fore-Time". The notion of

"Failing
(finished?) West..." (p.231)

runs insistently throughout the poem and despite Jones's re-creation of those once "dead symbols" which "litter to the base of the cult stone...", the poem concludes not with a resounding statement but with a series of questions:

"He does what is done in many places
what he does other
he does after the mode
of what has always been done.
What did he do other
recumbent at the garnished supper?
What did he do yet other
riding the Axile Tree?"

Jones's continuing belief in metamorphosis and transformation emerges in the varied form of the same question, as does his sense of the continuous interpenetration of the timeless with time in the central eucharistic mystery. But since the mystery he asserts to is articulated in the paradoxes of Incarnation, it is experienced as an incomprehensible certitude; and, therefore, he can never hope to live without questions. In Karl Barth's words, Jones's experience is of a "a central void (in which) the answer to our questioning is hidden; but since the void is defined by questions, they must never for one moment cease".[164]

The achievement, then, of The Anathemata is that it is an extended metaphor of what it is to be, uniquely, modern: for Jones, old forms of faith exist alongside present forms of explanation and the difficulty remains the association or integration of this apparent duality. The poet's role is part conservator, part prophet and wholly creative: keeping open the lines of communication with the past, whilst looking to the future, defines Jones's sense of tradition. That apparently moribund past and impenetrable future is, in a poem such as The Anathemata, made accessible and, in terms of the past, revivified, in the persona of Christ. By being in the crucible of transformation Jesus's body becomes a picture, a manifestation, "by him...present and past,/Heaven and earth are word of, worded by". It is by means of the poet's relation to him that this duality is realised and resolved. The poet's

imagination and intellect are engaged in his poetry to bring divergent meanings into the explicit focus of a living symbolic unity. As D.S. Carne-Ross has observed, Jones "is as conscious as Eliot that the Christian images have to be re-imagined if they are to get any hold on the modern mind".[165] The renewal of these images comes about through the soundness and integrity of the poet's literary method, that is, in his sensitivity to the language of imagination: literal description often reveals a theological truth, without directly asserting it, so that the renewal of belief takes place where poetry and theology modulate into each other. Jackson-Knight has claimed that The Anathemata "does what Epic is meant to do. It gives a philosophic view, tenable for our times, of the secret places where nature finds reconciliation with the Divine";[166] that looked-for reconciliation dominates The Anathemata, impelling the work towards a sacramental poetry of radiant signs and symbols. What Jones said of "Piers Plowman" is finally applicable to his own work: "...though no work could be more belonging to this island, or be more rooted in a given locality and its people, yet, at the same time, no work could be more dependent on something other: the religion - culture, without which the poem could not, conceptually, have been. Not only the poet's 'maistres and doctours' but everything within his purview is, in some sense, 'under criste and crounyng in tokne'".[167] This is his dwelling place.

## CONCLUSION

J. Hillis Miller begins his study of the "disappearance of God" in five nineteenth century writers with the pre-Socratic philosophers and the earliest writings of the Old Testament, where divine power is experienced as "immediately present in nature, in society, and in each man's heart". What Miller discerns is a sacramental sense, ratified by the Incarnation of Christ and by the Eucharist, in which symbols are not apart from the reality they represent, but are consubstantial with it. "The history of modern literature", writes Miller - and by this he means roughly from the seventeenth century on - "is in part the history of the splitting apart of this communion...words have been gradually hollowed out, and have lost their substantial participation in material or spiritual reality". However valid Miller's account may be for much of the later nineteenth century, one of his claims must be challenged on the evidence of the foregoing chapters. He writes that "in all stages of modern thought the interior states of the self are a beginning which in some sense can never be transcended." This is to ignore and to misunderstand the tradition of Romantic sacramentalism with which this thesis deals. He writes: "the central assumption of romanticism is the idea that the isolated individual, through poetry, can create through his own efforts a marvellous harmony of words which will integrate man, nature and God."[168] What has been argued throughout about Coleridge, the central theorist of Romantic sacramentalism, and about Hopkins and Jones, is that the interpretation of a theological and philosophical understanding

of symbol has allowed them to escape from the trap of idealism, and to articulate subjective experience, so that by the openness of symbolism, idealism is transmuted into a personal but not solipsistic realism. Romantic sacramental theory is predicated not simply on creation, but on imaginative re-creation, the poet's subjective ordering responding to an order of things sensed in the reality outside him.

The sacramental model which Coleridge re-interprets from Thomist theology has at its heart the mystery of transcendent truth, articulated in the symbol of the Incarnation. That paradigm substantiates and guarantees the poet's symbol, through which the poet is able to grasp the numinous in human experience; it also describes one of the characteristics of sacramental poetry, that it conveys a sense of two worlds, what Professor Lovejoy terms "an ethical and metaphysical dualism, a philosophy of two worlds". In the sacramental poet's view the mystery of the two interacting worlds - each present to the other, each consubstantial with the other - can and must be embraced by the translucence of symbol, in which both worlds can be seen in the light of a single vision, what Coleridge termed the "one life".

The poetry of Coleridge, Hopkins and Jones is, at its most intense, a search for the numinous, and is essentially a religious act which culminates in symbolic vision, for only by symbol can the indefinably "numinous" be articulated at all, "An IDEA, in the highest sense of that word, cannot be conveyed but by a SYMBOL", writes Coleridge. This search is more properly

defined as a meeting, since it is a search which is in some measure already successful. The "search" is a struggle to articulate what has been grasped without words - what has been felt in the heart - and yet must be "worded". The encounter with the sacred has taken place and yet continuously takes place in the symbol, so that the poem is the common ground between reader and poet and the energising force of the meeting. The language of symbol is in Coleridgean terms "fiduciary": it evokes an act of faith and trust on the part of the reader. As L.C. Knights has said, symbol "takes its meaning from a context: but - as it were - overlapping with the given context is the context of each individual's developing life experience, and the full meaning - the generative power - only exists in so far as this too is in some way - powerfully or subtly - affected".[169] The symbolic experience, on one level, is an encounter between the poet and the numinous and it is in and through the latter that we too are introduced into the complexity of that mysterious certainty, and are enriched by it. The making or perceiving of the symbolic, then, involves a union of subject and object: there must be a commitment of self, or in Coleridgean terms, an act of faith which involves intellect, will and emotions. In poetry, as in religion, we are required to make a complex act of inference and assent, which begins as Coulson reminds us "by taking on trust expressions which are usually in analogical, metaphorical, or symbolic form, and by acting out the claims they make: understanding religious language is a function of understanding poetic language."[170]

The practice of a sacramental faith, in either the literary or the religious sense, presupposes a middle ground between Coleridge's "mechanical understanding" of hard fact and the escapism of mere fantasy. Sacraments, metaphors and symbols are "the living educts of the imagination", expressed in "words that convey all their separate meanings at once, no matter how incomprehensible or absurd the collective meaning may be". The poet or theologian must guard against the failure of imaginative feeling, if the language he uses is to "word" adequately the complexity of his experience. Following Newman the poet must say and unsay to a positive result so that,

"Between two worlds become much like each other,
So I find words I never thought to speak".[171]

The modes of the operation of poets such as Hopkins and Jones are frequently paradoxical, propounding verbal contradictions and ambiguity, so that sense is kept broken and in growth. The poet must dislocate language into meaning so that metaphor and symbol arouse and convince our imagination and at the same time succeed in grasping or showing reality: the sacramental poet's task is to be found in keeping such truths free from translation and thus ossification. Being is revealed through the symbol which is suspended when essential reality is grasped in it; if it becomes fixed and hardened, it turns into an object in the world and loses that essential reality, then it collapses into mere metaphor. Spiritual goods, like real presences and true meanings, are qualities which stay single even in participation.

The right symbols for them include a family of emblems, amongst which we find the five loaves and two fishes which, broken by the right hands, become food for thousands. This creative power, locked in the symbol and released by the artist, is the source of spiritual nourishment.

The sacramental symbol for Coleridge, Hopkins and Jones is a finite participation in the infinite creative act of the I AM, and, as such, is one of the ways in which the grace of God is mediated to the individual; but it seems to me that what we see issuing in the poetics of Hopkins and Jones is a development of sacramentality derived from Coleridge and Aquinas and yet offering a special contribution to our thinking about symbol. It is a dimension of sacrament which has come to the fore again only recently in the work of theologians who have written on the nature of sacraments, and it is the notion of sacrament as personal encounter. The Dutch theologian Edouard Schillebeeckx contends that there has been a tendency during the past two centuries of theology towards "a purely impersonal, almost mechanical approach" to the Sacraments, because they were considered "chiefly in terms of physical categories". The response of much modern theology has been to found the study of sacraments on the concept of "human, personal encounter". Sacraments are ultimately "the properly human mode of encounter with God",[172] and the sacramental symbol acts as a mediator between a subject and reality other than the self. Paul Tillich speaks in his Dynamics of Faith of the "opening up of reality" that takes place in the symbol. "All acts create symbols for a level

of reality which cannot be reached in any other way". It is as Coleridge would have it: "An IDEA, in the highest sense of the word, cannot be conveyed but by a symbol." But Tillich goes on to insist and define what is essentially Hopkins's and Jones's contribution to the development of the sacramental tradition: their use of symbol "not only opens up dimensions and elements of reality which otherwise would remain unapproachable but also unlocks dimensions and elements of our soul which correspond to the dimensions and elements of reality. A great play gives us not only a new vision of the human scene, but it opens up hidden depths of our own being. Thus we are able to receive what the play reveals to us in reality. There are within us dimensions of which we cannot become aware except through symbols, as melodies and rhythms in music."[173] If Hopkins's and Jones's symbolism is not always the specifically Christian sacrament revealing the Creator-God, it is always at least the sacrament of human experience, including man's experience of the numinous: if not the sacramental encounter with the infinite, it is the sacramental encounter with the mystery of one's self. The conclusions of the two most satisfying poems of Hopkins and Jones, "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire" and The Anathemata, are best understood in these terms, for as Coleridge has declared:

> **"That which we find in ourselves is...the substance and the life of all our knowledge. Without this latent presence of the 'I AM', all modes of existence in the external world would flit before us as coloured shadows."**[174]

Jones's last painting, "Y Cyfarchiad I Fair" ("The Greeting to Mary") gives form to these beliefs of Coleridge and symbolises in its working of the theme of the Annunciation the meaning of the sacramental tradition. In the painting, metaphysical and earthly realities are conjoined in the figures of the angel and Mary and reconciled by the commerce between them, the annunciation itself. The Welsh hill setting chosen by Jones as the focus for the realisation of the word of God, the "latent presence of the I AM", is the same place where Hopkins lifted up heart and eyes to glean his saviour and whose "lips yet gave...a/Rapturous love's greeting of realer, rounder replies"[175]; what soon becomes apparent is the conjunction not only of realities within the painting, but also between the "fact" of the painting and its "value" as symbolic utterance. The sacramental poet becomes a type of Marian figure who, in his "magnificat", words , or gives birth to, that "substance and the life of all our knowledge", so that imaginative re-creation partakes of the Incarnation and gives authentication to man's hope of redemptive restoration. Painting and poem come to word the difficult, often paradoxical, resolution of the literal and figurative into a grammar of assent, so that what begins as "an impression upon the Imagination" becomes "a system or creed in the reason". The poetry of Hopkins and Jones effects, above all else, that modulation of faith into belief, since the poets are like the children in the fire, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, singing the praise of creation: they allow the body - mind, heart, voice and eye - to be the passage through which nature's alien particularities are reborn into wide human meanings. The

presence of a mysterious fourth in the burning, fiery furnace is the presence of God; divinity not as an object of consciousness, but as in Hopkins's and Jones's art, the living fullness of consciousness whose presence is always in the Son's broken bread as the source of all goodness, and whose art is our life.

## FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1 DJL, to HJG., 22 May 1962, p.190

2 Letters to Jim Ede, ed J. Matthias, Poetry Nation Review, 22, Vol. 8, No 2, p.15

3 This basic groundwork is covered by Thomas Dilworth in "David Jones and Gerard Manley Hopkins", Hopkins Among the Poets, ed R. Giles, 1985 and S. Rees, David Jones, Boston: Twayne, 1978, pp.133-5

4 Dilworth, op. cit., p.53

5 Letters to a Friend, A.T. Davies, Swansea, 198 , pp.86-87

6 Letters to Vernon Watkins, ed. R.Pryor, Cardiff, 1976, p.59

7 Dilworth, op. cit., p.54

8 IP, p.49, see PH, p.82

9 IP, p.172

10 The Sleeping Lord and other fragments, Faber, 1974, p.62

11 DJL, p.155

12 John Johnston notes some of these resemblances, especially in IP. He also says that David Jones's "profound sensory awareness" and his description of natural phenomena "recall Gerard Manley Hopkins's vivid prose notations as well as certain passages in his poetry". English Poetry f the First World War, Princeton, 1964, pp.347-8

13 Letters to Jim Ede, op. cit., p.11

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15 Thomas McFarland, Romanticism and the F rms of Ruin, Princeton, 1981,p.4. He derives the term from the Greek verb "diasparasso" - "to rend in sunder or in pieces".

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30 For Continuity, Cambridge, 1933, p.139

31 EA, p.242

32 See EA, p.268; ANA, p.204

33 DG, p.134; also The Sleeping Lord, p.64

34 Corcoran, op. cit., p.5

35 "Now and in England", Spectator, 4 May 1974, p.547

36 "D.J. and 'The Break'", Agenda, 15, Nos.2-3, 1977, pp.126-131

37 See Spengler, The Decline of the West, Vol I, p.41; also "Art ın Relation to War", DG, pp.123-166

38 Quoted in McFarland, op. cit., pp.11-12

39 David Jones's fascination with the poem originates with his c pper engravings in 1929 for Douglas Cleverd n; through the introducti n to the p em written for a n w edition published by Chilmark Press, 1964; up to an essay - a fuller version of the 1964 introduction published in DG, pp.186-225

40 See IP, p.199

41 IP, p.6

42 See The Duchess of Malfi, V, iii, 9-19: "I do love these ancient ruins:... all things have their end; Churches and Cities, which have diseases like to men/must have like death that we have."

43 See "Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves" and the "Terrible Sonnets"

44 McFarland, op. cit., p.21

45 IP, Preface, p.9

46 IP, Preface, p.34

47 DG, p.28

48 ibid., p.248

49 Letter to Hague, 9-15 July 1973, David Jones, R. Hague, Cardiff, p.56

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